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WHAT SHALL I TELL THE CHILDREN?

WHAT SHALL I TELL THE CHILDREN?

OBJECT SERMONS AND TEACHINGS

BY

GEORGE V. REICHEL, PH.D.

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DEDICATED

TO

MY LITTLE "QUARTET"

MAY, HAINES, PAUL, AND CHRISTABEL

PREFATORY

The fact cannot be denied that a scriptural teaching, illustrated by some simple, easily obtainable object, given with an interesting, pointed story in briefest form advisable, becomes an invaluable aid in solving the perplexing question, "What shall I tell the children?"

If successfully answered, there should remain no reason for anxiety because the young absent themselves from religious gatherings. Interest them in an instructive, helpful manner, and they will come to hear what you have to say, and to see what you have prepared. Hence this book, the material of which is new, freshly gathered from truth-proven sources, and tested by actual use in practical Christian work in a large parish, throughout which young people of all ages are numerous.

This experience has suggested, also, the arrangement of material given. Thus a *title*

is suggested at the head of each chapter that most attractively presented the subject of which the particular chapter treats.

The *object used* is given after such title, so that both object and title may at once present to the teacher's or superintendent's mind an idea of the work which that subject should require in preparation.

The phrase *scriptural basis* is used because it is a more flexible designation than "text"; therefore, admitting whatever treatment the individual teacher, pressed with many duties, can bestow, delivering him or her from the unnecessary so-called "textual development," which, with children, is not always practicable, however much it may be so with audiences composed of older persons.

It should be clearly understood that this book is intended only to suggest to, not arrange for, the teacher or superintendent the manner of presenting a subject. Personal preferences and tastes must determine what to use and what not to use. Modifications, definitions, all necessary explanations to suit particular conditions in a school, society, or class, even considering the youngest

child in each, are matters the teacher's personal liberty of judgment may best specify. Work *with* this book, not *by* it. Remember that it is never the "easiest thing" to adapt valuable yet difficult material to the requirements of children. This will account for the change in style throughout the book—now direct to the teacher, now to the child, often *to neither of them.*

Let me add that nothing I ever attempted has given such pleasure and profit, both to myself and to the children of my parish, as have these object-illustrated teachings; and demand for more work of the same kind continues undiminished.

The thanks of the author are due the publishers of the *Homiletic Review* for permission to make a number of extracts from the department entitled "Light on Scriptural Truths from Recent Science and History."

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WHAT SHALL I TELL THE CHILDREN?

I

THE JUDGE'S STORY

OBJECT USED: Copy of a school geography somewhat worn.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "With all perseverance" (Eph. vi. 18).

THE following story, first related by a well-known lawyer of Ohio, in about the form here given, well illustrates the quality of perseverance.

Some years ago, Judge —— was making a purchase in the principal book-shop of an Ohio city, when there came in a very ragged little boy, who asked the clerk if he had any geographies to sell. The clerk replied that they had plenty of them. Stating what

grade of geography was wanted, the boy asked its price.

"One dollar," said the clerk, curtly.

"One dollar!" echoed the boy, in dismay. "I didn't know they were so much." With this remark he turned away and opened the shop door to go out. Before he closed it, however, he said again to the clerk, "I have only sixty-one cents. Could you let me have a geography and wait a little while for the other thirty-nine cents?"

"No, sir," returned the clerk. His tone was unnecessarily sharp, and the disappointed boy, with a faint attempt to smile back at the judge's sympathetic look, left the store. The judge followed him, and in a moment came up to him as he was about to enter another shop.

"What now?" asked the judge, kindly.

"Try another place, sir."

"I will go with you and see how you succeed. May I?"

"Oh yes, sir, if you like." The little fellow seemed surprised, but made no comment.

Together they entered five different book-

shops, the boy each time stating his wish for a geography in such a manly way that the judge, who remained in the background purposely, could hardly restrain his tears at the repeated refusals. He wondered at the boy's perseverance, and told him so; but the reply was—

"Well, sir, I shall try every shop; otherwise I shall not know whether I can get one or not."

The proprietor of the next shop, however, seemed a little more interested than the others, and in answer to the unwearied query, "Have you any geographies, sir, and how much do they cost?" asked his little customer how much money he had and whether he wanted one very much.

"Yes, sir, very much."

"Why do you want it so very much?"

"To study, sir. I can't go to school, but I study when I can, at home. All the boys have got one; they will get ahead of me. Besides, my father was a sailor, and I want to know about the places where he used to go."

"Does he not go to those places now?"

"He is dead," said the boy, with a suspicious indication of breaking into tears; adding, after a pause, "I am going to be a sailor too."

"Are you, though?" said the proprietor. "Well," he went on, "I will let you have a new geography, and you can pay me the remainder of the money when you have it; or, I will let you have one that is not new for fifty cents."

"Are the leaves all in it just like the others, only not new?"

"Yes, just like the new ones."

The boy quickly made his purchase, remarking that he would now have the book he wanted, with eleven cents to spare.

"I am glad they didn't let me have any at the other place."

In answer to the bookseller's inquiring look, the judge told him of the little fellow's quest that morning, at which the gentleman seemed very much pleased; and the judge said that when the bookseller brought along the book he saw a nice new pencil and some clear white paper with it.

"A present, my lad, for your perseverance.

Always have courage like that, and you will make your mark."

"Thank you, sir; you are very good."

"What is your name, my little fellow?"

"William Haverley, sir."

"Do you want any more books?" asked the judge.

"More than I can ever get," he replied, as he glanced about at the well-filled shelves in the shop.

The judge handed him a bank-note, remarking, quietly, as he did so—

"It will buy some for you."

Tears of delight struggled to the boy's eyes. "May I buy what books I want with it?" he asked, eagerly.

"Yes, my little man, anything."

"Then I'll buy one book for my mother. I thank you very much, and some day I hope to be able to pay you back."

He wanted the judge's name, which was given him. The judge "left him standing," he said, "at the counter, so happy that he almost envied him."

Years went by, and the judge never saw him again until one day, on a return trip from

Europe, he discovered that the captain of the vessel in which he was sailing was none other than his young friend of the book-shop episode —William Haverley.

The meeting of the two men was very cordial, as we can readily imagine; and the homeward voyage was most pleasant until within a few days of port. Then a fearful storm arose, in which the vessel was rather seriously crippled. But the courage and perseverance of the captain brought them through in safety, though more than once the judge himself feared that his staunch sailor-friend would not be able to do so.

The above, in the very telling, should carry its application to the heart of every boy and girl present. The speaker using the story may, however, add by way of direct application whatever would be necessary for his particular audience.

II

THE "LAST ANGEL"

OBJECT USED: This story was originally used without an illustrative "object," as it did not seem to require it. Yet, should such be desired, it is suggested that any readily obtainable copy of one of Correggio's masterpieces be used. Of these there are many. The "Last Angel" was a single face, undoubtedly painted into some grouping with other faces, and therefore cannot, we believe, be identified with certainty.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor" (Ps. xli. 1).

ANTONIO ALLEGRI DA CORREGGIO was an Italian painter, born at Correggio, near the city of Modena, in the year 1494. He was an artist of great genius, especially studied for the original grace which his works exhibit.

Though so famous and much sought after, he never became rich. Indeed, he remained very poor all his life long, and at the last, when suffering from the fever which ended his career, was, with his large family, in the severest straits. He died in the same town in

which he was born, in 1534, at the early age of forty.

In addition to their destitution his family, after his death, might have inherited a large legacy of debt but for an exceedingly happy circumstance which befell him a little while before he passed away.

The story runs that one day Correggio gathered his sorrowing family about his bed, realising that amid so much bodily agony his end could not be far distant. He talked to them of the possible future for his art, but bemoaned the fact, as he believed it, that for his dear ones the coming days would be full of gloom and distress. They listened in heart-breaking sadness, and made no attempt to comfort him, for their own hearts were comfortless.

In a far corner of the room, upon a scanty bed, fast asleep, lay the youngest child of the family, a beautiful little girl of three years.

While he was so sadly speaking, Correggio turned his eyes in the direction where lay the child, and being suddenly struck with the unconscious, angel-like beauty before him, ceased

his complaining and called for his palette and brushes.

These were quickly brought him, and then and there, upon his death-bed, he painted his "Last Angel."

They marvelled at his remaining strength, and the deftness of his rapid touch. When it was finished Correggio himself declared it to be one of his best productions. Then he called his son Pomponio to the bed and bade him take the picture and see whether he could not at once sell it for needed bread.

Pomponio was much beloved by his father, not alone for his innate goodness of character, but for his own peculiar love of art. This boy afterward became an excellent painter, but never equalled his father's genius in any sense. He knew that the picture just completed was worth a large sum, but he was more than perplexed over the possibility of finding an able purchaser in as short a time as their necessities demanded.

In his predicament he went to his good friend and confessor, the well-known Father Antonio. To him he told the story of their destitution and his father's severe illness,

expressing his fear that Correggio could not long survive.

"Why, my son," said the tender-hearted priest, "why did you not come to me long ago? I might have been able to relieve you from much of this distress. But then, even now 'tis not too late. Yes, yes, go back to your suffering father and tell him to keep the picture for me, and bid him not to sell it until I see him, which will be within the shortest time possible."

Although not understanding precisely what his good priest intended to do, Pomponio hastened to express his gratitude, and then, with a lighter heart than he had known for many days, returned to his father, and told him that in a short time he would be able to sell the picture.

But one day after another went by, and no good Father Antonio appeared. Correggio was now sinking so rapidly that his end was expected at almost any moment. Once Pomponio slipped away unobserved, and hurrying to the monastery where Father Antonio lived, inquired whether he were away, and, if so, at what time he might return. The aged abbot

informed him that Father Antonio had been away for several days, but where he had gone and when he would return he was not at liberty to state, for Father Antonio had many cares and secret errands of mercy to attend to, and was a privileged son of the Church.

Pomponio turned away with a heavy heart. "He must have forgotten our great need," thought he, and as he walked along he could not restrain the tears, unheeding the curious looks cast upon him by people passing.

Unless food were obtained before evening his father must die of very starvation. When he reached the house he found his mother and the family in greatest apprehension. The last hours of the dying artist had indeed come. Without a thought to ease his burdened heart, Pomponio, completely overcome, sank upon the floor by the bed and gave way to loud weeping.

"Weep not, my dear son," said Correggio, in a feeble voice. "God has not forgotten us. He will surely"—

Just then there came a loud knocking at the outer door, as of one in haste to enter.

Pomponio sprang to his feet. Oh, joy! Was it—no, not Father Antonio that strode into the room, but a tall, handsome knight, with a white plume in his helmet.

"Lives here the good painter Correggio?" he asked through his closely drawn vizor.

"He does. I am he," responded the artist from his pillow.

"Then, my brother," replied the knight, "I come in the name of the King of France to say to you that he desires to purchase your last painting. He offers twenty thousand florinos.[1] Will you sell at that price?"

"Oh, Sir Knight," returned Correggio, as a happy smile lit up his wan face, "the king is good indeed." Then, lifting himself with great effort until he rested upon his arm, he continued—"The king is liberal. Yes, gladly will I sell the picture. We are very poor, as you may see"— here he slowly turned his eyes about the room. "Indeed, we are starving, good sir. Pomponio—bring"— But he could say no more. The joy of his deliverance

[1] Twenty thousand florinos are equivalent to eleven hundred pounds. The Italian national equivalent for a florino, or Tuscan florin, is two and a half paoli.

caused him too much excitement, and he sank speechless upon the pillow again.

Tears filled the eyes of the beholders. None spoke, but remained about the bed, while Pomponio stole noiselessly away to get the picture. Before he could return with it the dying man spoke again.

"To whom, Sir Knight," he said, "are we indebted—for the faithful—delivery of the king's message?"

"To one you have long known and who has long known you." With these words the knight threw up his vizor, and, behold, it was none other than Father Antonio himself!

Cries of joyful recognition burst from the lips of all. Pomponio, just then entering with the painting, almost let it fall in his astonishment.

"Oh, Father Antonio! Never again will I doubt the good friend of our fam—"

The priest interrupted him with a gentle wave of his hand.

"Give thanks to God alone, my son," he said. "He, and He only, delivers us from all distresses."

That same night Correggio died.

The "Last Angel" accomplished a timely ministry. By its sale the artist's family were saved from penury, and were able to begin to live in reasonably comfortable circumstances.

The faithful priest Antonio always remained a staunch friend of the family, and when, shortly after, his last hour also came, he called for Pomponio and told him that the French king who had purchased the "Last Angel" was so pleased with the treasure that he wanted very much to see its painter. But, since he was dead, he wished to do something for his promising son; and whenever Pomponio was able to do so he wished him to visit the French court, that the king might have a personal interview with him.

After the priest's burial Pomponio visited the French king, who was very gracious to him, and gave him a valuable present. This royal recognition was a great assistance to the rising young artist; yet he never gained any celebrity for his works, although he closely followed his father's style. He never forgot,

however, the good family priest of his boyhood, and in emulating the example which the blessed Christ sets for us all, he learned to know the meaning of the words, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor."

III

THE UNHAPPY QUEEN

OBJECT USED: A picture of a crowned female head.
SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "Love never faileth" (1 Cor. xiii. 8, R.V.).

"ONCE upon a time" there lived a king who had a very selfish disposition and a cruel temper. Although he had everything, as is usual with kings, and, no doubt, always succeeded in passing away the time in his own self-indulgent way, yet, without cause, he would get very angry at anyone who seemed to be happier than he.

This king had a very beautiful young wife. She was as good as he was bad, and as much beloved throughout the kingdom as he was hated. Her unselfishness, united with her youth and beauty, received the more praise because she considered the humblest and the poorest of her people just as much as the proudest and the richest.

Whenever the king and queen rode out together the people would greet the queen with every demonstration of loyalty and affection, but toward the king they were very cold. At first the king marked this difference in the popular manner with silent wrath. Soon, however, he expressed displeasure, not by growing more intolerant toward his people, but by finding fault with his innocent and lovable queen. He blamed her for the people's dislike of him, and told her that she was making him no end of trouble.

The poor queen, so perfectly innocent of any wrong intent, made no defence, but she began to grow despondent, which everyone except the king noticed with anxiety.

One day the king attempted to make the queen quarrel with him, and though he was very abusive she uttered no complaint, but quietly sought the seclusion of her own apartments at the first opportunity. There, unrestrained, she gave way to tears. Her maids of honour sought in vain to comfort her. Hers was a heart so tender that everything they attempted while in her excited state of mind only brought the tears afresh. Sadly

they watched her, grouped about her couch in mingled terror and loving apprehension.

While thus occupied, a page entered and announced that the king desired to see her at once. Drying her tears, she arose in silence, scarce glancing at her maids, who dared not detain her, and went as she was commanded.

She found the king as she had left him—in a high passion.

In loud tones he now directed her, at the peril of remaining under his lasting displeasure, to never again look upon the people outside the palace walls.

Poor queen! How was she to obey this most unreasonable, unheard-of command? Should she shut herself up in her apartments for ever? No. That she was not commanded to do.

So, whenever she went out in the royal carriage, or walked in the palace gardens, she kept her gaze fixed downward, never once looking up, even when spoken to.

The people greatly wondered at first over her change of manner; but when they learned what was her reason they became all the more eager to show her their love; and though they

could not persuade her to disobey the king's command, she, too, assured them of her unchanging love for them all, and continued, as she had done before, to scatter her gifts everywhere.

As time went on, and the king still held his queen under these cruel orders, the people grew more and more hostile toward him, and at last they manifested their feeling openly.

This made the king the more arbitrary, which caused the unfortunate queen additional suffering. He gave her still another command, to the effect that she must not only refrain from looking upon the people, but must send them no more gifts and greetings of any sort.

We easily can imagine that this was all very hard for the loving queen to bear; yet she continued to obey with the same surprising submissiveness as before. This did not diminish her popularity. Whenever she appeared among the people, even when the king was present, they did not hesitate to crowd about her with such unmistakable, almost extravagant demonstrations that the selfish, heartless king was almost beside him-

self, commanding the royal guard to drive the people away. Once, when she was alone in her carriage, and the people had no immediate fear of being ordered off by the soldiery, some of them begged her to at least smile upon them, even though she could not lift her eyes, nor in any other way greet them. But when the king heard the request, he forbade her compliance.

Alas! what was she to do? She must not look upon nor speak to them, send them gifts, nor even smile. It was a desperate state of things indeed. People asked one another where all this cruelty would end. That it was seriously affecting the queen's health the whole kingdom knew. Mournful faces appeared everywhere. Gaieties of every description in the brilliant capital ceased. The queen never left her own private apartments now, except on the rarest occasions. Rumours of the king's brutal treatment were constant.

Finally the people could endure the suspense no longer. Some of the more courageous convened a great mass-meeting in the city square. The king was loudly denounced, and plans were discussed before the

populace, by which the king should be compelled to resign his throne in favour of the queen.

But before all this could be carried out, the king, who learned from his secret spies what all the excitement in the city was about, and fearing an immediate loss of his power, gave orders that he, with the queen, be at once conveyed to the place of meeting, in hope that the queen's presence would, for a time at least, quell the disturbance.

He could not have been more adroit. For when the outriders hailed the coming of royalty, the dense throng, barely parting to let the carriage pass, sent up a mighty shout of welcome. But the king knew only too well that the welcome was for the beloved woman at his side, and not for him. With visible emotion the people saw how thin and pale she had become, and as hisses and threats arose with the noise of her welcome the king trembled.

A man near the carriage, unable to control himself, shouted, "Coward!" Many at once took up the word and boldly repeated it. Up sprang the king to address the multitude; but

the people, mistaking the action as an attempt to order the royal guard to charge upon them, cried now one thing, then another. The uproar was terrific. No doubt, in another moment, the excited people would have dragged the king from the carriage had not thought for the queen's safety prevented attack.

All this time the queen, with downcast eyes and pallid face, sat in her appointed place, her hands folded in her lap. She had smiled when they shouted their welcome, but the angry threats and general tumult caused a look of apprehension to come upon her face.

Just then a rough-looking working-man, who had elbowed his way to the side of the carriage nearest which the queen sat, held up toward her a pretty little child, who sweetly clamoured for a caress. It was not to be resisted; so, while the thought flashed through her mind that she had not been forbidden to kiss any of her people, the queen bent forward and pressed her sad lips to the child's fair brow.

The action produced a most astonishing effect. The vociferous multitude hushed its outcries. Those crowding upon the royal

conveyance fell back. When the king arose none interrupted him, though they could hardly believe their ears at his words.

"My people," he began, "I have done you all a great wrong, especially my beautiful queen." Here he paused, and, stooping down, gently kissed her. Then in a voice trembling with feeling he bade her look up at her people again and do toward them as she had always been accustomed to do before he had so afflicted her and them by his cruel commands.

None can describe the happy moments that followed the king's speech. Tears were in all eyes. Many sobbed aloud for joy. The carriage lingered to enable the queen to receive her delighted people's congratulations, while the king, stricken with remorse to his very soul, hid his face in his hands, repentant tears overwhelming his usual sternness of demeanour.

Many of his subjects never forgave him for his conduct. Most of them, however, willingly overlooked it, and never again did he offend them; for, as he himself confessed to the queen, "I have learned that 'love never faileth.'"

IV

THE BLIND SCULPTOR

OBJECT USED: A drawing of the head of Washington Irving, as reproduced by the sculptor, Mundy, a copy of which may be found in *Appleton's Annual* for 1891, facing page 300.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "Work . . . while it is day" (John ix. 4).

IN the beautiful village of Tarrytown-on-the-Hudson, in the State of New York, there lives an artist who has recently completed one of the most remarkable pieces of art-work ever known.

This is a sitting statue of the famous writer, Washington Irving, produced almost entirely by the artist's sense of touch; for you must know that this artist, whose name is Johnson M. Mundy, is quite, though not altogether, blind.

Many persons have wondered how Mr. Mundy accomplished his work, knowing the

condition of his sight, and the fact that his model was formed through such impressions as he could obtain from a small photograph of Irving, treasured in the family for many years.

The best understanding of the manner in which his work was carried out is this: at the hour of noon, when the light is usually brightest, Mr. Mundy would take a pair of large opera-glasses of high power, and with slow but successful effort manage to see enough of the little picture of Irving before him to reproduce the features, one by one, in clay. Of course his work upon the clay model was wrought entirely by his delicacy of touch, the one examination of the photograph daily, until this model was finished, being the only means to insure accuracy of which he could avail himself. From the finished clay model the artist has made one in plaster. From this, again, the cast in bronze is taken. It is said that members of Irving's family, his descendants, who have seen Mundy's work declare it to be absolutely beyond criticism; and it is therefore, among likenesses of the great writer, destined to stand for all time.

What an instance this is of persistence and intelligent purpose despite an almost insurmountable difficulty! How many boys and girls who have so much to aid them to good, useful lives, and to whom the kind Father above has granted many endowments in mind and heart, are slow to appreciate the advantages they possess over others; spending their time and ability upon pursuits unworthy of them, thus losing opportunities which perhaps never return—opportunities fraught with the most enviable success! Some boys and girls will never use their opportunities and gifts until it is too late to make much use of either. Then, when those who fought hard for life's success until they won it, have entered upon the enjoyment of their labours, the neglectful, careless ones, whose chances once seemed the best, will be forgotten and despised.

Do not forget the brilliant success of the blind sculptor, Mundy. If he has made a high place for himself in the world's esteem, should not you, my bright-eyed, clear-headed, energetic young friend? If, too, you have some great difficulty to overcome, remember that

success comes only through triumph over that difficulty. Either the difficulty will master you, or you the difficulty; here lies the issue. What shall it be?

V

THE CHAMELEON

OBJECT USED: A picture.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: This animal being but once mentioned in the Bible (see Lev. xi. 30), a scriptural basis for the following cannot be suggested with directness. It may be left, therefore, to the reader's discretion either to use the reference in Leviticus, or to omit a scriptural basis altogether.

HERE is a curious little animal. He has been brought all the way from India, and wishes to have us take a good look at him, and to study him a little more correctly than we may have done heretofore.

The name "chameleon" is of Greek origin, and means "little lion" or "camel-lion." Just why he had this peculiar name given him does not appear.

Notice how well adapted his long, slim body is to climbing. Like a lizard, which he resembles in some respects, he is able with toes and tail to hold very firmly to even

a hard, smooth surface, whether inverted or perpendicular.

Watch him closely, and presently he will open his long jaws and project a very thin, splinter-like tongue, which actually measures from six to seven inches in length. The surface of this tongue is covered with some sticky substance, which enables him to lick up the smallest insects he desires to feed upon.

His eyes appear to be very small, but in reality they are quite large, being almost always entirely hidden, except the pupils, under a heavy membrane or eyelid, pink-tinted at the edges. Each eye turns about in any direction the animal wishes, without reference to the other eye. Thus, from above or below, from left or right, the chameleon may observe what is going on and act accordingly. When an enemy is near he can sight him with the greatest ease.

He is, however, a very lazy fellow, and were it not that he likes to sleep a great deal, would be difficult to capture. When sleepy his movements are so sluggish that one is very much surprised to learn how quickly at other times he can move about. If he sees it to be

necessary he will even leap distances of from eighteen to thirty inches.

The chameleon has a powerful set of lungs, enabling him to inflate or deflate almost the entire body. This serves him many purposes, which we will not now explain.

The natural colour of this remarkable creature is a fine green, which changes, no one knows how, to the deepest wood-brown, or to the lightest green, yellow, and grey. It is said that other colours or hues occasionally appear, but we have never seen any but those mentioned. We believe the prevailing notion that the chameleon changes its colour to correspond with the object upon which it may at the time be resting is without foundation, except in those cases where the colour of the object happens to be green, brown, yellow, or grey, as stated.

Another misconception is that the chameleon lives upon air entirely. This would be hardly true of any living creature, much less of the chameleon, who, though he for months at a time may eat little or even nothing, yet, when he does eat, manifests his tastes very distinctly. Let him live on some large-leaved

plant in the house or conservatory, as we permitted ours to, and he will keep it clear of every infesting insect. Put him in a sunny window and he will watch for flies untiringly. He will not refuse bread-crumbs, and as for water, will drink it from a teaspoon as daintily as if he were sipping dew.

There is one characteristic of the chameleon which is not readily noticed, unless the creature is under daily observation; and that is, he is extremely sensitive to the treatment he may receive. If gentle, he becomes very familiar, and will venture upon your extended finger without hesitation. If he is roughly treated he will hide himself so successfully that it may take a long time to find him again.

In countries outside their habitat, chameleons do not usually thrive well, especially here in the Northern United States. Many people easily confound them with the green lizard, which is altogether another creature, and not as interesting.

Singular as the chameleon is in all that has been said about him, he possesses one feature which may well serve to impress a very helpful

lesson. It is this: when the weather is sunniest he is always the brightest. Now, while this is natural, you may say, do you not know, boys and girls, that not infrequently one sees a very dark, gloomy face on even the brightest of days? Have you not seen some children at times, around whom everything was as sunny and beautiful as could be, whose little faces were shadowed with sudden anger or habitual discontent; for whom, too, nothing could be done to make them remain in a bright state of mind and heart? We know that you have seen them. Who were they?

VI

THE FLORA OF CARMEN ISLAND

OBJECT USED: A blackboard map of the Californian peninsula, showing also the outline of the west coast of Mexico, including the Gulf of California, and indicating the position of Carmen Island, as described in the following chapter.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "I know thy . . . poverty (but thou art rich)" (Rev. ii. 9).

How often Jesus endeavoured to impress upon His disciples the truth, as He expressed it, that "life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which it possesseth"! He gave them to understand that there was a wealth even in poverty, a richness amid destitution, a fruitfulness in the barren things of life. His own divine abundance, though for our sakes He had become poor, was continually set forth in the beauty, the glory, of His life and character. If only His followers had more thoroughly realised it!

It not infrequently occurs to-day, among

our boys and girls, that the heart's natural discontent with present possessions will prevent their seeing that amid the poorest life, the hardest and most discouraging circumstances, there may be maintained a beauty, a richness of character worth more than money, more honourable than many titles to worldly property.

The church of ancient Smyrna, spiritually described in the Revelation (ii. 8–11), was very poor in temporal things, but rich in heavenly things; not because it neglected to consider its temporal welfare, but rather, while mindful of all necessary temporal interests, it put the first emphasis in importance upon its heavenly concerns. So was it able to rise above its poverty, its despised condition, and secure, and affirm through the Spirit, eternal possessions.

Although this Smyrna church well illustrates the Saviour's teaching, nevertheless it is not always easy to learn its truth to our own satisfaction. The experience of a noted botanist during a visit of research upon Carmen Island may be of help to us.

This island lies amid the dangerous shoals

and currents of the Gulf of California, though in a part of its waters which have proved better suited to navigation than some would, perhaps, suppose who have visited this singular region of the world.

Marking carefully his direction, the venturesome man of science reached the island from a not far distant point on the Mexican coast. He found it to be little more than marshland, and at first must have experienced a feeling of disappointment. The plants and flowers he had come to find would hardly grow in such wretched soil. Yet, not disheartened by the first impressions, as other visiting botanists had been before him, he began his research.

At the beginning, little was found which secured any return for the hazardous journey from the mainland. But he persisted, and with such painstaking inquiry that his efforts met with far greater success than he had deemed possible. Upon completing his work he found that the supposed mere marshland of Carmen Island had yielded into his possession over seventy different kinds of plants, and six of these, native to the island, were entirely new in the science of botany!

Apply the general truth here illustrated, with the aid of the map suggested. Refer to the unfavourable position of Carmen Island, and describe its desolate, unpromising condition. Then dwell upon the results of the botanist's investigations, drawing therefrom an analogy between the facts here given, and the apparently hopeless yet surprisingly fertile state of the poorest child's life, girt about by shoals and currents of temptation, infinitely more dangerous to the soul than are the Californian Gulf waters to the sailor, and whose home conditions and social possibilities generally need, first of all, intelligent, patient understanding, gained only by persistent investigation.

Let the teacher bear in mind that however great are the depths of degradation to which any human life, young or old, may be impelled, truth is to be found therein somewhere, somehow. Not even are the greatest depths of the Atlantic or Pacific oceans without living current, despite the erroneous view of others to the contrary. The United States hydrographer, Mr. Littlehales, tells us that the *bottom current*, flowing from the Antarctic Sea through the south Atlantic to the equator,

keeps the lowest depths of ocean astir, even though at times that current scarce indicates its presence, its motion being so slow.

Happy that teacher who can show a sin-sunken heart that, though exceedingly faint and slow, it may be, truth's renewing, heaven-reclaiming influence is to be felt and clearly realised, setting in oftentimes through many an unknown current.

VII

THE PILOT CHART

OBJECT USED: A drawing, made upon either a large card or a blackboard, of a pilot chart.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "The way of a ship in the midst of the sea" (Prov. xxx. 19).

EVERY boy and girl is interested in ships. Many of you have taken real voyages in them, while others here have perhaps imagined much of the pleasure, and, sometimes very vividly, the excitement and danger of such voyages, when sailing your ships upon the park lake, or upon the meadow pond, or, more likely still, in your mother's wash-tub.

The safe, successful sailing of a ship depends upon very accurate knowledge of what constitutes the highest seamanship. For, so beset are the ways or lines of regular ocean travel by all sorts of danger, known and more often unknown, that even the most skilful captain needs all the latest and best helps he

can get. Not alone in his nautical maps and instruments does he find these, but also in what is known among seamen as the "pilot chart."

This chart (display it) represents that section of the great Atlantic Ocean which lies between Europe and North America, and upon it is printed much information absolutely indispensable to the practical sailor. The chart is printed (or drawn), as you see, in three colours—black, blue, and red.

The first part, the black, indicates the permanent features in and about the sea, such as coast-lines, islands, rocks, and general currents.

The second, the part in blue over the black, gives the weather-forecast and the various, ever-changing sailing and steamship routes. By using this blue data, sailing-routes are always made more quickly, because shorter, than by the ordinary information found upon other charts. Steamers, by its guidance, are also kept off the dangerous lines of floating wrecks, icebergs, and logs.

The third division of this valuable chart, printed in red over blue and black, gives all

the changes of lights made from time to time along shore, and also indicates the shifting of buoys and beacons. All severe storms are likewise shown, where they originate and in what directions they are moving, with a general estimate of how violent they are and over what area they extend.

Despite all these precautions, however, many fine vessels mysteriously disappear every year, and are never heard of again.

Every human life is like a ship upon the ocean.

We not only need the latest and best instruction we can get while sailing life's sea, but this instruction must be of daily, immediate assistance. We must have a sure guide, a chart, prepared by One who Himself sailed life's stormy waves and triumphed over its dangers.

We have this help—this chart—in Christ's own holy Word.

By it we may know just where lie the dangerous rocks of temptation, and where to trace those unseen currents of evil influence which, when once yielded to, sweep the soul irresistibly on to destruction. The Bible

warns us, also, against life's great storms of sorrow, many of which, in the experience of others, we need never meet if the directions of the "Chart" are closely followed.

So, again, God's Word shows us the safest "sailing-route" to the Heavenly Port, thus helping us avoid the innumerable dangers of our "course."

Besides all this, it gives us distinctly the beacon-lights of promise, which keep us off dangerous obstructions, and protect us against the eccentric movements of life's moral wreckage. With this "Chart" of charts, the young and inexperienced mariner may guide his bark with the assurance that its "indications" are correct. But should he disregard them, as so many are very apt to do, he will sooner or later subject himself to the greatest peril, which, at the last, will result in the loss of all he has in this world and hopes to have in the next.

Let us, therefore, cherish this infallible and holy "Chart," growing every day to regard it as more and more the only Guide that certifies a safe and happy voyage over life's tempestuous sea.

VIII

WEEDS

OBJECT USED: A bunch of dusty weeds, such as may be gathered at any country roadside.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "Whence hath it tares?" (Matt. xiii. 27).

SEE, children! Here is a bunch of many and very ugly weeds. What dusty, neglected little things they are! Hardly worth looking at, you say?

Yet they may teach us an important lesson, which perhaps has not occurred to you when carelessly brushing them by on the familiar road.

These ugly weeds are perhaps the best illustration we can find of the persistent, all-pervading nature of evil, of which we wish to speak to you to-day.

Botanists have a great deal to say about what they term the "migration" of weeds.

Migration means a moving about from one place to another, seeking a home.

Now, it is very certain that many of the weeds represented in this bunch came originally from foreign countries. Just how they emigrated, in every case, we, of course, cannot know, and probably we never will. Some, however, came with boxes and barrels of freight on ocean steamers; many were stowaways; some flew over into our country on the wings of the wind, on river bosoms, hidden amid the thick foliage of imported plants and flowers, or in the heavy plumage of migrating birds, or clinging to the hair of passing animals, besides by a hundred other ways, including the agency of man.

Weeds usually come and go in all directions. They are nature's tramps, starved, dirty, frowsy-headed, neglected, and despised; even at times presuming to steal free rides on railroad trains, hidden comfortably in a passenger's bouquet. For example, the weed of the Mexican poppy is one of the commonest pests in American fields, especially in the South. Originally this poppy came from Brazil, and may now be met with even in

the Northern States. Then there is another well known, of tropical birth, which came North a number of years ago, hidden away in cotton-bales. A short time ago a box of Chinese toys came to New York, labelled for Chicago, and in the wrappings were a number of weed-clover seeds, which are now flourishing all over the State of Illinois and portions of Indiana. In some manner the seeds of this weed were carried down to Florida, where they grow the year round.

Thus the seeds of evil migrate, until to-day there is no place upon the earth where the seeds of sin do not grow.

How do these seeds get such firm and widespread grasp of children's hearts? Some are carried as "stowaways" in very young hearts, which otherwise, like a noble merchant ship, carry invaluable treasure; some are borne upon the wings of passion; some are hidden among the loveliest flowers of virtue blooming in the heart's garden; some cling to the words of our lips; others fall with the work of busy fingers; while still others appear we know not how nor whence.

Farmers tell us that the best way to rid a

field of bad weeds is to sow good seed thickly and constantly.

So, boys and girls, there is no better way to rid our hearts of sin's weeds than to sow a constant and generous amount of everything that is good. (Amplify the application as desired.)

IX

FLYING BIRDS

OBJECT USED: A picture of a flying bird; with it show also a picture of the Statue of Liberty, which stands on an island in the New York harbour, this statue being directly in the line of the migration of birds flying southward down the Hudson River valley. Many of the facts here given were gathered from observations made by two well-known specialists. The observations were made at night, during the migratory period, from the gallery or platform surrounding the torch.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem" (Isa. xxxi. 5).

THE Bible has much to say about birds. It seldom, however, mentions their migratory habits. The above passage from Isaiah is perhaps the clearest in this reference to migration. (Ask for a definition of the word "migration" or "migratory." If none is given, state your own.)

Understanding what this long word means, boys and girls, we can properly read Isaiah's

words as if he had said, "As birds migrate, so will the Lord defend Jerusalem."

What can this mean? For answer, we turn to the flying bird itself, finding first of all that when a bird migrates it is always from a colder to a warmer country.

It hurries away from a land of snow and ice and desolation to the land of flowers and warmth and beauty.

So, boys and girls, the Lord, in "defending Jerusalem," His beloved Church, delivers her from the land of sin, where all is desolation and death, seeking by His grace to bring her, upon the pinions of faith and prayer, to that heavenly summer-land where all is joy and life for evermore. The bird flying towards the south, though the journey may be a long one, comes daily nearer to its beautiful home, so bright with glad sunshine. For you and me the journey to heaven may be a long and ofttimes dreary journey; yet every day the promise to the Church of her future rest grows more and more glorious. Yes, the many hard, weary experiences of this earthly life, with all its strange, unexpected changes, are rapidly passing; and some day, amid the splendours

of heaven, we will forget all about these troubles.

Then, again; whenever a bird flies toward the warmer, happier country, it follows a line through the air which for generations birds have used. This line always leads to the southland, and is called the "known line of migration."

Now God, in defending (delivering) His children from sin, bringing them by His love, day by day, to heaven, bids them make this journey by a long-used, well-known Way, which Way is Christ. But this Way is sometimes apparently much divided, because we have so many denominations of Christians. Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Presbyterians—all follow the lines of their own denominations. Happily, however, God is guiding them all by the power of His truth, through Jesus the Saviour, who is for ever the one only true Way to heaven. In Him all the lesser lines are included, just as heaven's great expanse includes all "known lines of migration" throughout the world. God has given us all enough for our guidance to heaven, whether we belong to one denomina-

tion or another. The revelations of His Word are ample, and these are made still clearer to us by the help of the Holy Spirit, and by the growth of our own experience. As truly as the bird flying southward pursues the air-line followed by past generations of his kind, so God holds us all to the principles which were known to the earliest believer.

Again; birds, in migrating, fly at great heights above the earth—from one to even three miles. So, boys and girls, in pursuing our heavenly way we must rise high above the things of earth, if we would insure our souls absolute safety from all dangers. Fly high above sin with its temptations. So will you have broad, clear views of the grandest and best in life about you, and so alone will you secure uninterrupted, cloudless glimpses of the land before us.

Once more; birds are gifted with very keen sight and sharp hearing. At night they are guided as readily by sound as they are by sight in the daytime. Thus they follow the lines of flight with unfailing precision. Added to this well-balanced, twofold power, the bird possesses what may be known in other creatures

as the "sense of direction." So, by a far-viewing faith and unerring obedience, keen for every hint of God's will, with a soul sensible to every call to effort, the Christian is safely guided till he reaches his heavenly home. The bird seldom fails to reach his journey's end. Accidents, of course, are likely to happen; but these for the most part occur to careless birds—to those curious to stop and investigate any unusual, harmful object by the way, and to those birds, generally among the younger ones, who disregard the careful, watchful parent birds, who do not cease to warn them of all danger.

It is true, also, that flying birds pursue their way to the south often through sheer force of multitude, of countless number. All flying together gives mutual encouragement. Probably we will never know precisely how many birds pass a given point in their southward flight; yet observers, at the great torch of the Statue of Liberty in New York harbour, tell us that thousands of birds would undoubtedly fail to reach their desired country altogether, were it not for the stimulating presence of their companions.

So, finally, God delivers Jerusalem by directing what is kindly and helpful among Christians. Even a word of cheer, like an encouraging birdnote, given on the heavenly journey, may be of instant, recognised value in gaining a soul's salvation.

X

THE MUSICAL BOY OF JAPAN

(Legend)

OBJECT USED: The oldest musical instrument, as much like a flute obtainable. If desired, the legend can be told and its lesson impressed without the use of any "object."

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me" (1 Sam. xvi. 17).

MANY, many years ago there lived in Japan a great man. Indeed, there was none greater than he in all the country, for he was the hereditary chief of all the Japanese armies, whose word was more regarded as law for the people than were the commands of their own mikado. This great man was known as the shogun—a title which is sometimes confused with that given to the emperor. He was very proud of his descent, his name, and especially of his influence over the mikado and all his subjects,

and never hesitated to demand the fulfilment of every wish.

As he was so great and possessed everything anyone might desire to have, all the people considered the shogun a very happy man. But the truth was that he confessed himself as being very far even from content. In fact, he found himself to be very miserable; and when some of his followers would venture to tell him how greatly he was envied, he only turned away in bitterness and anger. This state of mind, however, could not endure; without something to divert his attention constantly, he would repeatedly fly into fits of terrible rage, which sent his servants out of his presence in much fear. Neither would they venture near him again, unless bringing some new form of amusement and pleasure. After a while this shogun grew very melancholy, and then, though less given to fits of anger, became very dull and stupid. Hoping to arouse him once more, one of his palace attendants arranged for a day's hunting in a neighbouring forest. But the shogun would not go. No one dared ask him again. The day following, however, much to everyone's

surprise, he proposed the hunt of his own accord. Preparations hastily completed, in an incredibly short time the whole place had turned out, and every one even of the mikado's attendants, together with those belonging to the shogun, were on their way to the forest. Only the shogun and the mikado, however, were ever permitted to hunt the game. As the shogun rode along on his beautiful milk-white steed he seemed to be unusually cheerful, and those about him were doubly careful to keep him so. But this mood was transient, and ere the forest with its abundance of game had been explored very far, he grew as sullen as ever. He refused to enjoy himself. Everyone became silent and unhappy. Almost noiselessly they rode on into the ever-deepening shadows of the forest.

Suddenly the shogun reined in his horse. "Hark!" he cried, lifting a warning finger. "Do you not hear music?"

Every attendant came to a standstill and listened intently.

At first no sounds of music could be distinguished. Then came a single note of such low, plaintive sweetness, that the very horses

upon which the hunting-party were mounted stopped champing at their bits and were still. Slowly the music rose, until the forest itself seemed swallowed in a sea of glorious melody. This was music as had never been heard before, and of the possibility of which none had ever dreamed. For the time the attendants forgot their master, and he forgot them, and, with them, all his fitfulness and passion. He was listening to the music with all the powers he had. Tears fell from his eyes as the enchanting melody flowed on—tears such as he had not shed for many a day—tears of joy.

But just then, as suddenly as it had begun, the music ceased. The last exquisite note died away among the grasses and wildflowers at the shogun's feet, as if he had trampled upon the unseen player and crushed divine harmonies into the dust.

"Ochikhu, Ochikhu," the shogun cried to his chief attendant, "search the forest for the player. Perhaps he is a god and will elude us. But find him, find him, Ochikhu, that I may hear his wondrous music again."

Ochikhu at once obeyed. He called a few

of his attendants about him and despatched them in various directions, with the command to reassemble before sunset; if any were successful in the search, to immediately inform the shogun, who had agreed to remain at the spot where he first heard the music until the return of the men.

But no sooner had Ochikhu and the searchers disappeared among the trees, than the shogun became impatient to make search in person. Without calling any of his remaining followers to accompany him, much to their astonishment he dashed into the forest alone. The great man seemed at last thoroughly aroused. "Ah yes," he murmured as he went on, "here is something worth the seeking. I must possess this mysterious player. If only I may find him I will be for ever content."

Long but untiringly did the milk-white horse push its way with eager rider through the gloomy shades. Though no road could be found, the shogun pursued his way wherever he found it possible for the sturdy animal to bear him. Now and then he would pause to listen for the music, but none greeted his ear. On and on he rode. He was beginning to

think the search fruitless, he had ridden so far. Where was he in this vast forest? The horse stopped as if in obedience to the thought that the search must be given up. With a dejected countenance the imperious rider turned the horse's head and rode slowly back to rejoin his waiting followers.

Stop! What is that? Lo! before him, under a heavy camphor tree, stands a little hut. Its tiny door is flung open, and on the floor within, upon a crude rush-mat, sits a little boy holding to his lips an odd-looking instrument.[1] He is about to play. Horse and rider stand motionless. Evidently they are not observed, and the boy, undisturbed, breathes upon the instrument in his hands. "Yes, yes," cried the exultant shogun, "it is the same ravishing music, and this is the player!" Springing from his horse, the excited man ran to the hut door, and bowing low to admit his person the more readily through the con-

[1] The ancient record of the legend describes the instrument, but the description is not readily understood without the actual instrument before us. This being obviously impossible, the statement must suffice that it was something like an ancient style of flute. Hence the suggestion at the beginning of this chapter, namely, to use an old flute if an illustrative object should be desired.

tracted entrance, surprised the player in no small degree.

We cannot stop to repeat all that now occurred, only to say that the shogun, having made himself known, prevailed upon the wonderful musician to accompany him to his palace and become his constant companion. Upon the morrow, after the mikado and his court had heard the story of the singular adventure, the player was brought into the royal presence to display his skill. Never before had the palace walls resounded to such music as poured forth from the weird instrument in the youthful, but amazingly dexterous, hands. When he ceased, a breathless stillness prevailed. At last the mikado motioned the player to him, and, giving him a tender embrace, called him a son sent down from heaven, and then bade him play again. This the willing player smilingly assented to, and far into the night, as through all that day, he played. He seemed not to know weariness while they listened. He knew that he had cast a spell upon them, yet sought no approving sign. He had made them happy, and that filled his young heart with fullest satisfaction.

Best of all, however, the people came to understand, as he remained with them from day to day, that not alone in the court, nor in the palace of the shogun, was a newer, happier life begun, but in the whole city of Kamakura, in Sagami, where the shogun spent most of his time, and in royal Kioto, where lived the mikado in almost constant retirement; and between these two cities the young forest player was constantly called, so that to every man, woman, and child came the sweet breath of the musician's influence. The empire that so long had been torn between the autonomous, yet spiritless, rule of the mikado, and that of the arrogant shogun, now began to bestir itself to another and better existence.

Unfortunately, the music of the mysterious forest lad was never written, nor communicated in any way, and after the then reigning mikado had died, and the shogun had become very old, several Japanese noblemen sought the great player and besought him to reveal the secret of his marvellous instrument. They pressed him from day to day, until one morning, the ancient record says, the player was

nowhere to be found. All parts of the empire were searched ; embassies visited other countries, praying in the name of the new mikado for his restoration to Japan. But no one had seen him, and no one could tell where he had disappeared. Even the old forest, as much as stood of it, was searched, but all to no avail. He never came back. His music became a tradition—weird, fanciful, but full of charm—to the succeeding generations of the Japanese, fathers delighting in nothing better than to repeat it to their children, and they, in turn, to theirs.

In reading this, in many respects, peculiar legend, one may be impressed by the resemblance between the sad and sated shogun, and the lonely, desolate heart of man, before the sweet music of heaven, brought to earth by the little Lad of Nazareth, gave to men new life, and hope, and usefulness. In vain does the world seek for joy enduring, unless it seek it and find it in the blessed music of the gospel of the Christ—He who, though with us in bodily form no longer, lives in the hearts of those who love Him by the power of His wonderful message and love. Yes, boys and girls,

these are the spring of every true energy in the soul of the nations on earth, and the secret of the world's happiness to the end of all time, and the glory of eternity.

XI

THE GREAT SHIVA AND THE LITTLE GRAY SQUIRRELS

(Legend)

OBJECT USED: A picture of a squirrel ("chipmunk").
SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast" (Prov. xii. 10).

AMONG the many wonderful stories told of the great god Shiva, or Siva, as he was sometimes known, is that of his kindness to some little gray squirrels.

Shiva's home was in India, and the people held him in great reverence because of the many terrible things it was said he did; but the following story about the squirrels would show that he did not always deserve the name of the "Terrible Destroyer," which the inhabitants of the country sometimes gave him.

One day, after a very heavy storm and flood,

heavier than that country usually experiences, Shiva was riding through the jungle on his beautiful ox, Nundi. Accompanying the god was his wife, Parvati, famous for her beauty, whom Shiva loved very tenderly. Parvati was remarking, with bright tears in her black eyes, the awful desolations to be seen on every side; for the elements had created enormous havoc. Shiva was much moved by her sorrow, and began to think what he might do to make her cheerful again. Presently they came to a swollen, wildly rushing stream. Upon its bank, and partly in the water, lay a large tree which had been blown down by the wind. Still clinging in the branches, but just at the edge of the water, was a group of frightened little squirrels. They were so terror-stricken, and perhaps so much injured, that they were unable to free themselves from their dangerous position.

Most touching of all was the sight of two other squirrels making vain efforts to extricate their little family from a large hole in the trunk, at a point where the water had not yet come. But the water, unfortunately, was rising higher and higher every moment,

and it was evident that they all would be drowned.

Alighting from the ox, Shiva went to the place, and, stooping down, gently drew the squirrels up out of the reach of harm. How warm his touch felt to their chilled bodies! Very tenderly he stroked their soft, gray fur with his beautiful fingers, when lo! as he did so, bright golden lines appeared upon their sides, which the little animals called in America chipmunks wear upon their coats. The Hindu declares that this is the origin of the chipmunk. Whether he is correct or not, the legend teaches a lesson of kindness to animals.

Boys and girls are sometimes tempted to be very cruel to God's helpless creatures, in their thoughtlessness, perhaps, forgetting that all animals are very dependent upon our kindness for much of the brightness of their lives; especially such little creatures as the chipmunk.

Animals usually show the effect of their treatment, whether it is good or bad, always rewarding us with their bright, happy ways if we are kind and considerate.

Do not forget, boys and girls, that the "righteous man," as Solomon said, "regardeth the life [*i.e.*, the principle of life manifested in the breath—the vital spirit—through which the body lives] of his beast."

XII

THE STONE SAILS

(Legend)

OBJECT USED : Model of a ship with sails set.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS : "And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land" (Acts xxvii. 44).

How many of you boys and girls have ever read about the country of Mexico? (Wait for a response.) What curious people the Aztecs were, who lived in that country at the time Cortez discovered it in 1519!

About three miles from the present city of Guadalupe, to the northward, on the border of the plain of Mexico, is the site of the ancient Aztec city of Tenochtitlan. Upon it now stands what is called the holiest shrine in Mexico, the church of Guadalupe. We are told that a causeway led across the lagoons from the old city, which in later times some Spaniards bordered with stone walls. Upon

several of these walls they placed shrines, to which the faithful came in great numbers.

The Hill of Guadalupe, which is the present name of the spot where the church stands, is nothing more than a great, barren rock between the lake on one side and the hills on the other. It is said that nothing was ever known to grow even in the vicinity of this barren rock, until one day, according to the legend, the Virgin appeared there to a good man named Juan Diego, of Cuanhtitlan, who, with his family, lived at Tolpetlac, a village not far distant.

It was on a Saturday morning in December, in the year 1531, that Juan Diego, on his way to mass, suddenly heard the music of angel voices, and, looking up, beheld, surrounded by a wondrous halo, the "holy Mother." He paused in alarm and started back, forgetting that, as Catholics are taught, it was his duty to fall upon his knees before her. But, before he could retreat any farther, he was made aware that the Virgin was addressing him, bidding him go to the bishop and tell him that it was her command to have a temple built upon the rock in her honour.

Juan at once hastened away to the bishop, and with much trembling and awe delivered his message.

The bishop, however, whose name was a very long one, did not believe Diego's story. Not discouraged, Diego returned to the place where he had seen the vision, and lo! there still stood the Lady. She bade him come to her upon the following Sunday, which he eagerly promised, with many crossings, to do. Accordingly, at the time appointed, Juan was once more at the place, the Virgin making her appearance as she had agreed, and repeating the command to the bishop, through Juan, to build the temple.

When Juan, now for the second time, had delivered the command from the Virgin, he found the bishop as unbelieving as ever.

"Until you bring me some evidence of the Virgin's appearing," the bishop said, "I will not believe the command was given you."

Juan sadly departed. Had he looked behind him, he would have seen two of the bishop's servants following, the bishop having secretly despatched them to keep Juan in sight and report what happened. But Juan went so

rapidly that the servants soon lost sight of him, and were compelled to return to their master without any information.

Juan, meanwhile, went to the place where the Virgin had again agreed to meet him, and, without asking for the bishop's answer, she bade him come again the next day.

This he did. There stood the Virgin upon the barren rock. "Kneel," she said, "and gather these flowers." In astonishment he looked down upon the rock, without comprehending her meaning. But as he continued to gaze, first at her, then at the rock, he saw, springing at his feet, a tiny flower; then another and another, until the whole hill was abloom with rarest loveliness.

Taking from his shoulders his tilma (a short cloak made of grass), Juan knelt amid the flowers and eagerly gathered as many as the tilma would hold. The Virgin then bade him carry the flowers to the bishop. As he turned away to do her bidding, with the flower-filled tilma carefully and reverently held in both hands, he witnessed another wonder. Just where the Virgin had been standing as she conversed with him now appeared a beautiful

spring of water. Almost overwhelmed he could not linger to see anything more, but sped to the bishop as fast as he could go. And now came the crowning wonder.

As he poured his flowers at the bishop's feet, behold, upon the emptied tilma itself appeared an image of the Virgin as she had appeared to Juan.

Of course, the bishop could not but be convinced. No further objection was made to the erection of the temple, which was soon completed.

Within that temple, we are told, there hangs a precious relic, the ancient tilma of Juan Diego, still showing clearly upon it the image of the Virgin.

Pilgrims from many climes, and speaking many tongues, come to this church of Guadalupe every year. Among them are maimed, halt, and lame, attracted not alone by the legendary character of the church, but also by the fact that not many years ago the Virgin was said to have wrought another miracle, by which a number of sailors were saved. As a memorial of her goodness, the sailors carried a mast of their broken ship over three hundred

miles from the coast, inland, and planted it, with sails full set, upon one of the steps of the ancient causeway. In recognition of their deed of thankfulness, the Virgin changed wooden mast and canvas sails into solid stone. And there they stand at the present day.

The Virgin of Guadalupe became the patron saint of Mexico, and her name is the battle-cry of the Mexican soldier. Though enveloped in a cloud of much superstition and mere tradition, the "Stone Sails of Guadalupe" are nevertheless a monument to the power of the sailors' gratitude for the Virgin's mercy to them in a time of peril.

We can learn a lesson here. How often does a Christian in a Protestant land receive deliverances from his Heavenly Father, yet manifests little or no gratitude for them!

In the story of Paul's shipwreck, boys and girls, how many of the crew and passengers thanked God that they had "escaped safe to land"?

Let the legend impress us with something more than its own fanciful beauty. Let us rather learn by it to be more grateful to our Father in heaven for what He gives us, not at

special times only, but constantly ; and though we may be able to erect no enduring memorial, we can render to His honour what will please Him far better—the memorial of a sweetly consecrated heart and life.

XIII

THE BOY ASTRONOMER

OBJECT USED: Several different objects may be appropriately used; namely, a small telescope, a star-chart, and, if obtainable, a picture of Lick Observatory. For a telescope, one made of a paper tube, into one end of which a common spy-glass lens is fitted, will be perfectly suitable. The star-chart and the picture of the observatory can be dispensed with if not procurable.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "Behold the height of the stars" (Job xxii. 12).

YOU have heard of the great astronomer, Isaac Newton, and have thought, no doubt, much of his wonderful deeds, wondering, perhaps, whether any other reader of the stars would become equally famous.

But we must remember that since Newton's day many astronomers have arisen, whose names are daily growing in the public estimation, and to whom are accorded discoveries of importance as great as any ever made by Newton.

Among these rising names is one, a young astronomer, who promises to be as great as any of his contemporaries. His name is Edward Emerson Barnard. Until very recently, he was associated with other well-known astronomers in the care of the celebrated Lick Observatory, situated on Mount Hamilton, in California. At present, advanced to the great Yerkes Observatory, near Chicago, greater things than ever will be expected of him.

He was born in Nashville, Tenn., on the 16th of December 1857. His early education was very meagre, but he soon gained a footing by untiring effort, and through the occasional help his own people were able to give him.

Barnard's father died when the boy was very young; and when the War of the Rebellion broke out, he was not only fatherless, but very destitute.

Though he was but eight years old, these hard circumstances compelled him to begin earning his own living. He obtained a situation in a large photographic studio in his native city, remaining in this line of employ until his twenty-sixth year. During these eighteen years he proved himself to be a man

of more than ordinary ability. He was invaluable to his employers, mastering every branch of the photographic art.

His favourite pastime, however, was spent with the telescope. It is related that on one occasion, not having enough money to buy a telescope such as he wanted, he constructed one out of a small paper-tube and a spy-glass lens. This served him some time, and, of course, proved to be much better than the unassisted vision. Through the kindness of a friend he secured a copy of Dr. Thomas Dick's *Practical Astronomer*, which he read and re-read with ever-increasing eagerness. From the various maps and charts of the stars with which the book was adorned, he very soon learned to read the heavens with readiness. All this very naturally added to his longing to go more thoroughly into the study of the celestial spheres; but his great drawback was the lack of means, and for a time he despaired of realising his ambitions.

One day a travelling showman happened to be in Nashville. Among other attractions, he had one which instantly caught young Barnard's eye. This was a very fair telescope, set

up at a street corner, and for a few minutes' use of which five cents was charged. Barnard was a steady patron as long as the pennies held out and the showman remained in the city.

This incident, trivial in character, was far-reaching in his life. Barnard now determined in real earnest to possess a good telescope of his own. By practising the strictest economy he, in his thirtieth year, was enabled to buy an instrument having a five-inch aperture, very finely mounted, and with all needed appliances. Since that time he has been successful to an unquestionable degree, and bids fair to become the best American astronomer of his generation.

Every little while he startles the world with some great discovery which older men in his profession have altogether failed to make. In one year he had discovered a large comet; shortly after, another; again, in 1885, a third; for all of which remarkable work he was awarded the Warner prize of two hundred dollars in gold.

With such a man its practical head, the magnificently equipped Yerkes Observatory

must become the leading institution of its kind in America.

Boys, and girls too, in such a dauntless life, bound to succeed, as this young astronomer has, we find a new inspiration for our own endeavours. Every boy, or girl, who really determines to succeed, will, in this country at least, find that poverty is not necessarily a barrier to getting an education or an honourable position.

Reflect, too, that in "beholding the height of the stars," as the Bible says, Barnard's eye was directed to a sublime study, creating within him the glorious ambitions of his profession, dearer day by day.

So, set your thought, young friends, on some object worthy of your ambition, and, if sought for God's glory, as well as for your own interest in every proper sense, with untiring effort, and, above all, with dependence on God's grace, you must win.

XIV

COVETOUSNESS

OBJECT USED: A coin.
SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "Thou shalt not covet" (Ex. xx. 17).

FIRST, ask the meaning of covetousness. The *Standard Dictionary* defines it as the character or condition of being *unduly* desirous to have or to own.

Francis Xavier, a French Jesuit priest, who lived in the first half of the sixteenth century, once made a surprising statement about covetousness. He said, "I have had many people resort to me for confession. The confession of every sin that I have ever known or heard of has been poured into my ear; but no one person has ever confessed to me the sin of covetousness."

A certain bishop once said, "One man alone ever expressed to me the fear lest he

should become covetous; and it is a suggestive fact that he was the most generous man I have ever known. We used to talk the matter over frequently. He would say, 'I have noticed that covetousness is the prevailing disease. I am fearing it for myself as I daily grow older; and I know of but one remedy, and that is—giving.'"

Boys and girls, there is no sin more contemptible than that of covetousness. History is full of instances illustrating this evil tendency in character. King Henry III., who had everything the world could give, was yet so covetous that historians usually say of him that he was a miserable extortioner and beggar. There was nothing too low or debasing to which he would not resort in order to gain his ends. Knight relates of this king that on one occasion, when the queen had presented him with a son, and the streets were illuminated, the people rejoicing, Henry took a base advantage of the occasion by sending out messengers into city and country to beg for presents. Some of the messengers brought back many gifts; then the king smiled. Others, however, secured

very little attention, and the gifts they brought to Henry, few and scanty, were angrily rejected. One of the courtiers, witnessing the king's selfish conduct, and knowing his habitual covetousness, said, with indignation, to one also standing by, "God gave us the child; the king would sell him to us."

In American Revolutionary days there lived in Virginia two bright young men, who, having each served a long time in the army, finally secured honourable discharge, and joyfully started on their homeward journey. One of these young men had only one relative living when he first went to the war—his mother; and he had many times wondered whether, after the tedious days in field and camp were over, he would find that good mother still living.

As the two young soldiers pursued their homeward way, they talked of the long time since each had seen his dear ones, and how glad would be the reunion.

"I very much doubt their being able to recognise us," said one to the other. "Let us try and see whether they will do so."

Agreeing to reach their homes by separate paths, they journeyed on till the village where they lived came in sight. Then they shook hands, and with mingled feelings each took a near yet separate way to his own door.

The soldier who had come only in quest of his mother found, as the door opened, obedient to his knock, that, though living, she did not recognise him. He was scarcely disappointed at this, for his appearance had, indeed, been much changed by the war. As he stood hesitating before her, he suddenly conceived the notion to pretend that he was a stranger seeking a lodging-place. She directed him to the hotel on the main street. But he told her that, as he had a little money in his possession, he was afraid of being robbed there, and should prefer to remain at her house if she would take him in.

To this she finally consented, still unaware of the identity of the stranger.

After the young man had retired, with every sense of security, and had fallen asleep, the mother, entirely ignorant of the fact that he could possibly be her son, as she believed him to have died in the war, called in a negro

whose hut was near the house, and told him of the stranger's arrival, and that he undoubtedly had money. Together they planned to kill him. The negro agreed to undertake the terrible deed of murder alone.

It was done. And now the supposed stranger lay dead in his own mother's house, slain by her fatal avarice.

Upon the morrow, the other soldier came to see his comrade, but, in answer to his inquiry, was told that no one had been at the house. Realising something wrong, he pressed his questions, till the mother became very uneasy, and in an agitated voice stated that a man in soldier's dress had been at the door on the day before.

"Well," replied the soldier, "I was with that man within a few miles of this house last evening. There we separated, he to come here, and I to go to my home. Our plan was to see whether you would recognise him, and whether my people would know me, after so long an absence. He certainly must be here."

No sooner had this announcement been made than the awful truth flashed upon her

mind. Yes, she had murdered her own long-missing son.

We will not stop to linger over the heart-breaking confession which this guilty mother made, as she took the horror-stricken soldier to a closet and there showed him the dead body of his comrade, crammed in behind the door.

Oh, boys and girls, money is good; but do not be overcome through love of it to live covetous lives, which lead to crime and destruction. Many a poor soul has lost itself for the gain of this world. Keep your fresh young hearts open to love of the treasures in heaven by seeking to give when you feel the disease of covetousness coming upon you.

XV

GOD AND THE ARCTIC TRAVELLER

OBJECT USED: A picture of icebergs and floating ice-fields.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "Saved . . . by a great deliverance" (1 Chron. xi. 14).

THE following story, given in the words of a well-known Arctic explorer, graphically sets forth the truth of an ever-watchful Providence, who, by timely intervention, delivers a valuable life from destruction.

"That you may get an idea of what risks one runs in Arctic currents," says this traveller, "I will tell you of our experiences during one day and one night only.

"One morning we observed that we were being rapidly carried by a strong current toward the open ocean, where a heavy sea was coming from the east down upon us. It was in vain to try to drag our boats over the ice-floe against this current; it was

inevitable that we must come into the dangerous breakers at the margin of the ice, and there, we knew, would be no safety.

"The ice-floes were smashed to pieces all around us. The one upon which we were standing was rapidly breaking up; in fact, it had already separated into several pieces. We had nothing to do but select another ice-floe, the strongest we were able to find in the vicinity, and upon this determine our struggle for life.

"After a while we got a strong floe, placing upon it our two boats, into which we had put all our possessions. Our tent, of course, we pitched upon the ice, and with it, for use at night, placed our sleeping-bags. These bags were made of peltry — untanned fur-skins—and are the same as those used by all Arctic explorers, large enough to crawl into feet foremost, furnishing an excellent safe-guard against extreme cold.

"At night all the men were ordered to sleep except one, who should keep watch and call us when it would no longer be possible for us to maintain our position.

While Captain Sverdrup took the first turn we crept into our sleeping-bags, even the Lapps among us feeling that we had seen the sun setting to-night for the last time.

"After several hours, I was awakened by hearing the breakers roar just outside the tent. I expected to hear Sverdrup call, or to see the tent swept away; but Sverdrup did not call, and the tent stood. For some time I continued to lie listening to the thunder of the breakers; but I soon fell asleep again, and did not awake until next morning, when I was amazed to discover that we had again approached land, and were far distant from the open sea.

"Sverdrup then told me that our position had been fearful for some hours. There had been a large mass of ice on one side of the floe, which had threatened inevitable destruction, crushing in upon our position little by little, until only the spot, and a narrow edge more, *where our tent was standing* was spared! Once he had come to the tent door to call us. He unfastened one hook holding the flaps of the tent, but paused before unfastening another, thinking he would still

look to see how formidable the next breaker would prove. This breaker was worse than all preceding it. He unfastened the second tent-hook, but again waited to observe the effect of the next wave. He did not unfasten any more hooks. Just *at the decisive moment* the current turned, and we were again carried toward land, away from the dangerous breakers."

XVI

A STORY ABOUT "RED JACKET"

(A Lesson on Temperance)

OBJECT USED: A picture of an Indian chief.
SCRIPTURAL BASIS: Any appropriate Scripture passage on the subject of temperance.

How many of the boys and girls present to-day have ever seen an Indian — a real, live Indian?

Some of you may have heard of the great chief of the Senecas, "Red Jacket." In the Indian language this chief's name is very long; it is Sa-go-ye-wat-ha. He was born, as you may have read, near the foot of the beautiful water called Seneca Lake. He lived to be seventy-eight years old, and was so active and ready all his life long that the people of his tribe looked upon him with great admiration and fear. They would say, "Sagoyewatha is always ready; he keeps us

awake." This is the meaning, therefore, of the long name, in his language. The name "Red Jacket," however, was applied to him because he never appeared in public without wearing a finely embroidered military jacket of scarlet, presented to him by an officer of the British army.

When a boy, "Red Jacket" was one of the swiftest runners in his tribe, which not only made him very valuable as a messenger, but very successful in the chase. During the American War the sturdy lad was often employed by the British to carry war-despatches for them, which, you may imagine, he did with expedition.

As "Red Jacket" grew older he was allowed a presence in the councils held by the wise men and chiefs. When called upon to speak he would always do so with great eloquence, which greatly added to his already fast-increasing popularity. One day he went to visit the President of the United States at Washington, George Washington, who gave him a beautiful silver medal. Of this he was always very proud, and it also helped, of course, to make him no mean person among

the white people. He went to Washington on another and later occasion, to interview the Secretary of War, who was very much impressed by the speech which "Red Jacket" delivered at that time, before a meeting of the Cabinet.

So, through one circumstance after another, this powerful and eloquent Indian became the greatest chief of his day. But alas! as his power grew, he became careless about his habits, which is often the case, boys and girls, among the best people to-day in our own and other civilised countries.

Yes, the great chief became very, very intemperate. Happily, before any great war-council was to meet, he would refuse to drink any "fire-water," as he called rum, so that he might have a clear brain for the important deliberations to be brought before him. But, though he abstained in this way at times, he let the habit grow stronger and stronger, until he could not shake it off. His people, and the whites too, now began to notice his lack of firmness, whereas in previous years his word could not be gainsaid. He grew to be cruel, although we

cannot find that he ever really ceased to love his tribe and his race when he was free from the influence of rum. His worst nature was uppermost when he was drinking, and so, by and by, one by one, great troubles came upon him. One day, not long before his death, a white lady, knowing that "Red Jacket" was a great lover of children, and that he had had several of his own, they now being all dead, asked him about his earlier and better life, when his beloved children were still about him.

Fixing his eyes upon her face, the old chief said, sadly—

"'Red Jacket' was once a great man, and in favour with the Great Spirit. He was a lofty pine among the smaller trees of the forest. But, after years of glory, he degraded himself by drinking the 'fire-water' of the white man. The Great Spirit has looked upon him in anger, and His lightning has stripped the pine of its branches."

XVII

THE RED PRINCE

OBJECT USED: A picture of a soldier (of the German army preferred) of high rank.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help" (Ps. cxlvi. 3).

MORE than sixty years ago, in the city of Berlin, was born a young prince, who was named Friedrich Carl (Frederick Charles), the only son of Prince Carl, a brother of the great and good emperor, Friedrich Wilhelm (Frederick William). Young Frederick's mother, a most noble princess, was a sister of the German empress Augusta. He therefore enjoyed the best of home-training through those many advantages which a royal mother, if she is of a good heart, can give her son. But, as the idea prevails in Germany that a young man, especially of royal blood, has not completed his preparation for active life without a thorough military training, Frederick Charles

was placed under the instruction of that dashing soldier who afterward became Prussian Minister of War, Major von Roon.

That the prince found his military training exactly to his taste is plainly shown by the fact that he soon displayed a remarkable grasp of the science of war, passing with brilliant rapidity from one post of command to a higher. In the Danish War of 1849 he proved himself as brave as he was brilliant, history stating that he practically decided the battle of Schleswig, which was the favourable turning-point for Prussian arms in that campaign. Added to his achievements upon the field of battle was a high reputation in literature, his subjects being naturally selected from the thrilling field of war. Although some of his writings were the cause of much ill-feeling in certain quarters, this courageous soldier lost nothing of the high esteem in which he was held by his friends. To a man with so many supporters as he had, a few jealous people made no difference. In fact, he seemed to thrive upon everything, whether seemingly favourable or unfavourable.

In February 1864, while but thirty-six

years of age, he opened the famous siege of Düppel, in Denmark. The Danish people, remembering the dashing soldier of Schleswig, in the previous campaign of 1849, knew that Düppel was doomed. After the fall of the city, his soldiers, who witnessed his wonderful ability and daring, before which nothing seemed to stand, gave him the nickname of "Prince Ever at the Front," or, as the German would say, "Prinz Allezeit Voran."

Not long after this he came into full command of the Prussian army as field-marshal, in which dazzling station he entered upon a long series of remarkable successes.

Now, the prince was very rough-and-ready in his manner, and the soldiers of the army, liking this, declared that with such a leader anything and everything could be accomplished. In the great battle of the Austrian campaign of 1866, at Sadowa, though he caused some displeasure to the Crown Prince, he won so great a victory over the Austrian nation that the little difficulty with his royal superior was forgotten.

Again, in that historical war with France, in which many of Prussia's sons gained honour

and fame, Prince Friedrich Carl placed his name among those imperishable names of war which are the glory of any country.

We have followed only a small part of his military triumphs, but we cannot prolong detail further. Suffice it to show by the above account that this soldier was a prince indeed. But this is only one side of his character.

Alas for human frailty! Grand in war, he was anything but noble in his family life. In fact, he openly neglected his wife and children, to such an extent that the Emperor of Germany himself was called upon by the suffering wife to interfere. This the emperor was compelled also to do for reasons that need not be stated. The result was that the great prince, the wonderful war-marshal, the brilliant conqueror, was retired in deserved disgrace to a castle in the rural district about Potsdam. Here he spent the remainder of his life in comparative obscurity, farming and hunting.

Germany has since had a long line of brilliant soldiery. But, though none are higher in the list of her military heroes than Friedrich Carl, whom the French have always called THE RED PRINCE, the final test of his

character, as shown by his abuses of his family, emphasises the Scripture at the head of this chapter: for only that Prince of princes, Jesus Christ, is to be "trusted," because trust must rest in the perfect, the faultless One alone. Yes, boys and girls, the perfect, the faultless Jesus is our trust and our confidence, hence our "help," because He never failed of His whole duty, fulfilling all things by His willing death, that we might be brought to heaven. "Put not your trust in princes, in whom there is no help." No, children, nor in any "son of man," but in Jesus, the Prince of princes, the Lord of lords, the King of kings, our Saviour and our unfading joy.

XVIII

A LITTLE CHILD'S FAITH

OBJECT USED: A picture of two children, a young girl and a younger boy, both very poor and wretchedly dressed, standing before a bright, well-filled confectioner's window, wistfully gazing at the tempting display within.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them" (John x. 27).

A NUMBER of years ago, in a great city, just at the holiday season, may have been seen standing before a confectioner's window, looking in at the beautiful, tempting things, two very young children, a boy and a girl—brother and sister.

The brother was much the younger, and his childlike exclamations of delight at the holiday array in the window made his older sister very sad; for, child that she too was, her heart beat with quick sympathy, since, despite her own longings, she well knew that, to possess any of the good holiday treasures

at all, money was necessary to buy them, and money, alas! in even her short experience of life, was a very scarce thing. How well she knew that her dear, sick mother at home was not able to earn much, even for the bare daily necessities required by them! And as to father, why, he had been so long dead that she could not remember the day he died.

"There now, Charlie," she was saying, as her brother, feeling the hopelessness of ever getting any of the holiday sweets, began to cry very softly to himself, with a piteous look on his baby face — "There now, Charlie dear, don't cry. You make little sister feel so bad. You know, Charlie, mother'll buy something, maybe, when she gets up a—" But here the sister's voice broke, and she was unable to restrain her tears.

It was, indeed, true. The city physician to the poor had told her mother, when they did not think they were overheard, that she could not live until the holidays. Yet the sweet little sister was trying to comfort her brother out of a comfortless heart, and she

herself so very, very young in the great, sad world!

The confectioner's window grew more and more fascinating as they continued to linger before it. What lovely sweets! And oh, what a lot of oranges and nuts, and such cakes!

"Come, Charlie," said the little sister, "come, dear, we must go home and see mother; and even if we can't get any now, we'll go and tell mother about them right away." Then she paused, giving a last eager look, first at the window and then into the crowded store.

"Charlie," she said again, before her brother could make up his mind to leave the pretty sight in the window, "wouldn't it be nice if only you could take mother one of those oranges—only one—that one there, Charlie?" indicating a fine California specimen lying amid scores of others nearly as large and golden as itself.

With a pathetic little shiver of grief Charlie lisped a faint "Yeth," which brought the tears, for some reason, afresh to his sister's eyes.

"Is your mother sick, little girl?" asked a voice behind her.

The child started, but, looking up, saw a kind, manly face looking down at her. The gentleman repeated his question.

"Yes, sir," she replied, slowly, with a look of inquiring wonder upon her pale face. "She is very sick, and she can't live a great while, not even till Christmas, sir. I heard the doctor say so."

"Would you like to take her some of those nice oranges in the window here?" asked the gentleman, as he noticed the tears start to her eyes again. He had been a witness of the whole scene, and had heard all that the children had said to each other.

"Oh yes, sir!" she said, joyfully. Then her voice became sad again. "But we are very poor, and can't buy any."

"Come into the shop with me and let us see what we can do."

The eyes of the little girl and her brother grew very large at this invitation, and then they suddenly became very shy of the kind stranger, and hesitated. Taking them by the hand, he led them into the shop. When

they reappeared, their little hands held almost more than they could carry of the good things seen in the window; and not a few of others, which the shopkeeper displayed only upon his counters, the kind stranger was carrying for them.

As they walked along, the children's faces showing the state of feeling within, the little girl turned suddenly to their benefactor and said—

"I do not know your name, sir. Will you please tell me?"

"Oh, never mind my name. Why should you want to know it?"

"Because, sir, mother has told me to always pray for those who are kind to me and my brother, and I thought I should like to tell God who you are."

The gentleman's face grew very tender as he replied, briefly, "Never mind, little one, about my name."

The child looked up at him a moment, but said nothing.

Presently they came to the place where the children lived, and the gentleman deposited his gifts upon the doorstep. As he turned

away with a cheery "Good-bye," the little girl, her brother beside her, said, with her arms filled, "Well, sir, if you won't give me your name, when I tell God about your kindness to us He will know who you are."

XIX

THE DOG OF ST. BERNARD'S HOSPICE

OBJECT USED: Blackboard or charcoal sketch of a St. Bernard dog. The head alone would be sufficient.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "I will seek that which was lost" (Ezek. xxxiv. 16).

WE recently read a new story of the Alps, entertainingly told in the *Temple Magazine* by the Rev. Russel H. Conwell.

The story fittingly illustrates the above Scripture passage, and can be applied with especial effectiveness to the youngest child, since all children are particularly interested in dogs, and learn readily from them. St. Bernard dogs, especially, are known the world over, and with such animals as bears and wolves compare favourably in the mind of the smallest child. Dr. Conwell says—

"One morning, after a storm, one of those great, honest creatures came struggling through

the snow, hampered greatly in his exhausted condition by the miniature barrel of brandy that hung to his collar. I waded deep in the drifts, following the floundering old fellow around the hospice to the kennel, which was a room of considerable size.

"When the door was opened to the wanderer, the other dogs within set up a chorus of barks and whines, and fell over one another as they crowded about him, and eagerly followed him around with wags of their tails and inquisitive looks in their eyes. All this was just as intelligent questioning as so many interrogation-points. But the crestfallen beast held his head and tail to the floor, sneaking about from corner to corner. Finally he wandered to the basement and lay down panting, in a dark niche. There he lay, with his eyes glancing out at the corners in a most shamefaced way.

"Knowing that he must be weary, the monk in charge of the dogs called the weary beast by name, trying to induce him to come forth from his shadowy retreat by showing him a dish containing scraps of meat. But, hungry as he was, the dog merely opened his

eyes a little wider, rapped the floor once or twice lightly as he gave a feeble wag to his tail, and then shrank back, refusing to show that he either heard or saw the monk's appeal.

"With an angry gesture the impatient keeper turned away, saying as he did so, 'The dog will get over his sulks very soon.' Evidently the dog could not be ill, his keeper understanding that the creature probably felt ashamed that he had not found anyone!

"The priest's remark shot into my soul with a thrill. That noble old fellow seemed to have felt so bad, so ashamed, or so guilty, because he had returned without saving anyone, that he would not eat.

"Yet it was not his fault that in that awful night no benighted traveller had been wandering about benumbed and dying. He had done his duty grandly; but he was just dog enough not to reason so far, and just human enough to feel that it was imperative with him to find someone.

"Grand old fellow! How he ought to put to shame many a human soul who, knowing

there are travellers going down in the biting cold and the overwhelming storms on life's mountainous highways, never yet saved even one such!"

XX

RINGING BELLS

OBJECT USED: A small model of the Liberty Bell. If a model is not obtainable, have recourse to the unfailing blackboard, which should have an undisputed place always in the work of instructing the children. Draw upon the board the picture of a large bell. It will interest the children more if the outline or representation is of a bell familiar historically, such as the old Liberty Bell already suggested, or Great Tom of England.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "Their sound went into all the earth" (Rom. x. 18). (If for any reason this passage is not considered suitable, select a direct reference containing the word "bell.")

"Peal out evermore—
Peal, as ye pealed of yore,
Brave old bells, on each Sabbath day,
In sunshine and gladness,
Through clouds and through sadness.
Bridal and burial have both passed away;
Tell us life's pleasures with death are still rife,
Tell us that death ever leadeth to life.
Life is our labour, and death is our rest;
If happy the living, the dead are the blest."

Dublin University Magazine.

Boys and girls everywhere are familiar with the sound of bells—bells great and small,

high and low, with clear tone and muffled tone. Bells! Bells!! Bells!!!

But how many of you here to-day could answer your own questions regarding the weights and tones of different bells, their manner of mounting or adjusting, means of transportation from the foundry to the belfry or bell-tower, and matters similar?

A good maker of bells would never, even for a corresponding price, turn out a poor bell. He insists always upon the best material obtainable, and charges accordingly. And though we often think the prices paid for bells generally are very high, when we remember that the maker must guarantee the material, tone, and durability of every bell, subjecting it to a "ringing test," as he would term it, the prices usually charged are reasonable.

The best bell is made only of pure copper and tin, as long experience has proved to the maker that these metals combined in proper proportion make the best "ringing alloy."

It would be very interesting to enter into

the manufacturing process of pattern-making; for every bell must have a pattern, determined by very careful study, as it would be destructive to the whole bell were the pattern in any way imperfect. No matter for what the bell is intended to be used, whether rung for a church, fire-alarm, academy, factory, depôt, steamboat, ship, court-house, fog-alarm, light-house, locomotive, or upon the plantation and farm, it must be a perfect bell. Then, in these different classes of bells, there are chime and peal bells, all of various size, tone, and price. Besides, more than a chapter might be written simply on the inscriptions placed upon bells. But we wish to speak of other things already suggested as possible questions in your minds wanting answer.

First, as to the moulding of a bell. Given a perfect pattern properly prepared, all bells (the best made to-day) are moulded in iron cases so arranged that both the outer and inner portions are made to correspond to each other absolutely in thickness and evenness throughout. If the right kind of a moulding-case is used the hot bell-metal is allowed to cool thoroughly in such a way that every

particle in the case has opportunity to become uniform with every other particle.

When the bell is ready to be shipped to its destination it is put into a stout frame of timber, which insures safe transportation under all ordinary circumstances, be the distance long or short, over land or sea.

Upon its arrival the bell should be hung at a point not much higher than the tops of houses surrounding the belfry or tower. If the bell-chamber is rightly constructed, the sound of the bell when rung will not be obstructed. It is easiest to hoist a bell upon the inside of a tower, unless there should be no space wide enough to do so. In that case the bell must be hoisted from the outside of the tower to the opening of the bell-chamber. There it is drawn inside by additional apparatus, and put upon its permanent frame, where it should have a perfectly firm and level resting-place. The standards, the wheel for the rope by which the bell is rung, the placing of the clapper within the mouth of the bell, the adjustment of the tolling-hammer just outside the bell, the fixing of the stop to prevent the bell being thrown over in ringing

—all these things follow in their proper order; not even forgetting to determine what should be the right size of the bell-rope, from a half-inch to a full inch in diameter, according to the weight of the bell to be rung.

From time to time the whole arrangement, including the bell itself, should be carefully examined, any necessary alteration or repair being promptly attended to, so as to preserve a perfectly satisfactory ringing bell.

If the boys and girls are made interested in the modern making of bells, the history of bells from earlier times could be not unprofitably traced. Since bells were known in the earliest ages, and are more than once referred to by some of the most ancient writers, it is suggested that the teacher read up the history, found in any good Encyclopædia or special work upon bells.

The Bible mention of bells is confined to the bell of very small size, such as was hung upon the border of a priestly robe, made of pure gold or other precious metal, which would tinkle upon being moved.

We read of an old painting of King David which represents him as striking with a small

hammer a number of bells hung upon a support before him; also that Tubal-cain and Noah, noted artisans of the Old Testament days, understood the making of a crude bell. But these are not reliable statements of history, although, no doubt, the origin of bells is very, very ancient.

Bells are found in old Peruvian tombs at times. Columbus took some bells in trade with Cape Honduras Indians while on one of his voyages to America. Mr. Layard, the archæologist, found bells (probably the oldest known) in the palace of Nimrod in ancient Assyria.

Egyptians, Greeks, early Teutons, as well as Romans, were familiar with bells. Ancient shepherds hung them about the necks of leaders in their flocks. Bells graced the caparisoned horses in the royal procession, and were heard in every race.

But these were all little bells. Big bells were first invented, we think, by the Chinese, about two thousand years before the birth of Christ. None were ever hung in churches until many years after Christ. Their use then became so general, that one writer, whose

name is not given, but who lived in the Middle Ages, wrote with truth :

"To call the fold to church in time,
We chime ;
When joy and mirth are on the wing,
We ring ;
When we lament a departed soul,
We toll."

The special uses to which bells were put are shown by the names given some of them, thus : the *Ave Maria* or *angelus* bell ; the *vesper* or *evening prayer* bell ; the *compline* bell, the last rung on a holy day ; the *Sanctus* bell, rung at a certain point in one of the Roman Catholic masses, the people kneeling at its sound ; the *passing* bell, when one is dying ; the *curfew* bell (*couvre-feu*), to tell the inhabitants that it was time to put out the fires and go to bed ; and the *tocsin* or *alarm* bell, rung from fortresses and castles at the approach of foes.

Bells have a singular influence in daily life. For instance, one day the great Napoleon Bonaparte was at a place called Malmaison. General Bourrienne, who accompanied him, has written :

" When we were at Malmaison, how often

has the booming of the village bell broken off the most interesting conversation! He [the emperor] stopped, lest the moving of our feet might cause the loss of a single beat of the tones which charmed him. The influence, indeed, was so powerful that his voice trembled with emotion, while he said, 'That recalls to me the first years I passed in Brienne' (the French training-school at which he received his early education)."

Another interesting story to show the influence of bells upon individual life is given by an unknown writer, as follows:

"There is a tradition in connection with the peal of bells in Limerick Cathedral. The peal was said to have been brought from a convent in Italy, for which place it had been manufactured by an enthusiastic Italian with great labour and skill. The Italian, having made a fair fortune, fixed his home on the convent cliff, and for many years enjoyed the daily chimes of his beloved bells. But in some political convulsion which ensued, the monks were driven from their monastery, the Italian from his home, and the bells were carried away to another land.

"After a long interval the course of his wanderings brought him to Limerick. On a calm and beautiful evening, as the vessel which bore him floated along the broad stream of the Shannon, he suddenly heard the bells peal forth from the cathedral tower. They were the long-lost treasures of his memory! Home, happiness, friends—all early recollections were in their sounds. Crossing his arms on his breast, he lay back in the boat. When the rowers looked around they saw his face still turned toward the cathedral, but his eyes had closed for ever on the world."

But of all sweet sounds this world has ever heard, or will hear, boys and girls, is the heavenly sound of the gospel, which like a bell of heaven rings out the joyous news of salvation in Jesus.

That inviting sound follows us everywhere. Sometimes we hear it as the Saviour's voice, soft and clear, sounding in our hearts. Will you not obey its call?

Upon one of the busiest streets of a great city stands a church from whose belfry tolls the mid-day hour of prayer. The voice of the bell mingles with the hum of trade. Yet no

sign is given by the hurrying crowds below that its call is heeded. The bell ceases; its voice is forgotten. The crowds hurry on as if it had never spoken.

Oh, dear children, hear the call of Heaven to-day—*now*.

XXI

THE RIVER OF THE DESERT

(Legend)

OBJECT USED: Upon a blackboard draw a picture of a desert. Have it in readiness before beginning your address. At the right point in the legend following, and before your audience, draw a river through the desert upon the board. Elaborate as much as you please.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "And the water came out abundantly" (Num. xx. 11). "They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them" (1 Cor. x. 4). (Use either passage, or both.)

WE are indebted to a new writer for the retelling of a legend which we call the Legend of the River of the Desert. This writer has rewritten the legend in excellent verse. But as that form does not best suit our present purpose, we render the verse with the prose form, as here given:

Many, many years ago, in the Far East, there might have been seen one day a young Arab chief and his beautiful bride riding

rapidly across a vast, scorching desert. Strange to say, for people of their rank, they were entirely unattended, and whence they came and whither they were going, the legend does not state. Evidently their journey would be a very long one, its object, therefore, important.

The magnificent horses upon which they rode were to all appearance equal to almost anything. But it became unmistakably apparent after a while that, as mile after mile of the fiery desert was passed, and they seemed no nearer their destination, the horses would utterly fail the young travellers unless water —that scarcest of all things in such a region— could be found.

Several times the travellers moved from the known track, first to the right, then to the left, in search of a possible spring. But alas! as with all travellers in the desert, it was only a hope without a reality. Water there was none, neither for man nor beast.

At last the poor horses could travel no farther, and the youth, "faint and pale," lay down upon the sands to die. His lips, swollen and blackened from the heat, could scarce utter the cry for water.

Beside him, weeping, trembling, stood his bride, equally exhausted, but aroused at the thought that her husband was dying.

No, no, he must not die; and, flashing her wavering hope into swift resolution, she caught from her girdle a bejewelled cup, and, after bestowing a hasty kiss upon his withered brow, went out across the scorching sand, determined not to return until she could bring the cup filled with water.

So hot was the way she went, her feet blistered within their sandals; her eyes, it seemed to her, would be burned out of their sockets, so blinding the light.

How her rapidly failing strength, despite all resolution, was supported is a mystery. The legend simply states that as the sun went down she came back to where her husband lay, her hand holding the bejewelled cup, containing water, as much as she could keep from spilling, despite the roughness of the way. Just as she started to lift the cup to the sufferer's lips, in some unaccountable manner the cup slipped from her eager hand and went rolling over the sands. Every drop of the precious water sank out of sight, swallowed in the scorching waste.

But look! Ere she could utter a cry, or the sufferer realise the calamity, up sprang from the spot where the water had disappeared a beautiful river!

With ripple and song it danced away over the desert. By magic, on either side of the river appeared banks of living green. Quickly the travellers drank, and, pursuing the course of the sparkling waters, reached their journey's end with rejoicing.

It is only a legend, but it teaches not only that

> "Many a dire misfortune proves
> A blessing in disguise,"

but of One, the spiritual Rock—Christ Jesus—who is the true River of life's desert, bringing up out of our withering, life-destroying distresses the pure, sparkling water of everlasting life.

We are travellers in a weary desert. Shall we not in the parching thirst of our souls drink of Him and live?

XXII

WHEN WE ARE TRIED

OBJECT USED: A bright green ball.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. x. 13).

IT is ordinarily supposed that the subject of trial is adaptable only to older persons, younger people and children having so comparatively little experience of life's difficulties. We have lived to see the fallacy of this view, and therefore devote a section of this book to this particular subject, as it relates to the comparatively inexperienced; for though none of us, young or old, "know what we are capable of," as Mrs. Jameson, in *Halloran the Peddler*, says, "till the trial comes," it is nevertheless true that to the youngest and tenderest often comes a trial well calculated to

make the heart of the stoutest man and most resolute woman quail.

Many a little child in our overcrowded cities bears in its very countenance traces of grief born of the keenest anguish; and its form, worn, emaciated, not always through special disease or hereditary taint, tells an unspeakable story.

We may have just such a child, perhaps—one just emerging from childhood—in our school, society, or class. For such a one why should not the passage selected as the scriptural basis of this chapter be fraught with lasting help and comfort?

That the youngest may be aided to appreciate the force of the lesson, show a bright green ball, or bit of green paper cut in the form of a square or triangle, or in any other convenient way.

Ask all to look at the object very intently for a time. Then bid them look away from the object at a blank space upon the wall, and if all the conditions of the test are met, they will see a *red* object upon the wall, which will be the exact size and shape of the green paper or ball.

By means of this simple experiment you can explain that there is operating in life constantly a law of contraries. Thus the green object becomes to all appearance red, and *vice versâ*. Thus, too, when the proper limit is reached, and change ensues by not inharmonious transitions, even a martyr amid the burning fagots, who first feels intensest pain, will thereupon experience pleasurable sensations the most thrilling. For this reason, many a violent process of death, or death by torture, though at first full of torment, will find the limit at which succeeding inflictions will cause no agony.

So with all the trials, burdens, griefs of life; God has set a limit to them—literally, in the expression of Scripture, "a way to escape." Trial passed leads to the calm of victory. Gethsemane is illumined by the presence of angels come to minister. Night shade gives place to morning light, the soul fearless, trustful, resigned, even as the foot presses the ascent to Calvary, whereon all is laid, that all may be taken again!

Poor little waif of the city street, did you think God had forgotten you when cruel hands

drove you forth to seek your own bread—that He had laid upon your childish heart a burden so heavy that you could not bear it? Or perhaps some well-dressed, much-praised Pharisee, exalting himself in the vanity of his selfish, unfeeling heart, passed you by when you were most in need and filled with pain, so setting the dissembling, worldly-minded priest, following hard after, the heartless example he, though knowing better, was only too glad to conform to. But after these have passed, poor little waif, who is it comes, looking down into your eyes and seeing in their depths the soul immortal, priceless? Who is He, child? Do you not know Him? It is Jesus, your Way of escape from trial, burden, grief; Jesus, who loves all the children, but who reserves the warmest, softest, deepest place in His heart for the cruelly treated, shamelessly neglected little waif, the wandering lamb of the fold.

The above is only one example of a style of application. The teacher may deem a less direct, more impersonal application preferable. Be that as it may. The important point to be borne in mind is that children

of the youngest, and at the same time intelligent, responsible age, have burdens to bear, amid which Jesus alone can stand to point escape.

XXIII

THE APTERYX

OBJECT USED: A picture of the apteryx, that exceedingly rare bird of New Zealand, is difficult to obtain, unless such as may be found in any first-class, illustrated Encyclopædia, enlarged for present use by means of the ever-helpful blackboard. If no Encyclopædia containing such cut is at hand, illustrate the following text of Scripture with the picture of any bird obtainable. (See *Chambers' Encyclopædia.*)

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "Behold the fowls of the air: . . . your Heavenly Father feedeth them" (Matt. vi. 26).

MAN'S excessive anxiety over the daily necessities of life, such as food and clothing, receives an effectual rebuke in our Lord's lesson of the fowls.

We may readily understand how the Heavenly Father feeds them, if we remember that He has not only endowed every bird with the instinct directing it where to find its food, and how, but also that He sees to it that the food is there when the bird goes in search of it.

It often happens that birds must fly long distances before their food can be obtained. It would seem, therefore, that God's care is emphasised in a new, effective way in the case of those birds who, having no power of flight, are nevertheless wonderfully, divinely provided for in some particular manner.

Such a bird is the apteryx of New Zealand. It has the semblance of wings, but small and undeveloped. Not long ago someone brought a live specimen of this rare creature to the curator of the French Museum of Natural History in Paris. He at once made elaborate preparations for its care, first placing it in a warm room, and then every day feeding it with a certain food, most carefully prepared. No other bird in the museum received such painstaking treatment. It was fully believed that all this treatment was, of course, necessary to its life, and that if not maintained, a valuable addition to the museum would be lost.

But one day, to the consternation of the museum attendants, it was discovered that the apteryx had mysteriously disappeared! Everybody was called to the rescue, and diligent search was made through the grounds

surrounding the museum and in the neighbourhood ; yet no trace of an apteryx, nor anything that looked like one, could be found. The curator was in despair ; and though the search was from time to time repeated, all effort to find the bird was unsuccessful. At last winter came on, and the scientists said, "If the bird has remained alive till now, the cold will be sure to kill it." When spring began, all thought of ever seeing the missing bird had been practically abandoned. However, a great surprise was in store for everyone! On a very bleak March morning, one of the curator's assistants heard a dog belonging to the institution barking very savagely at something in the cellar of a new structure, not yet completed, and not far distant from the principal building. He went at once to investigate the cause of the dog's behaviour, and what was his astonishment to behold the apteryx, alive and well, comfortably ensconced in a ventilating-hole in the cellar wall!

It did not take long to arouse the curator and the other persons in the museum. All gathered about the rescued bird, wondering at its sleek, healthy condition, vainly seeking

answer to the questions as to what it ate, and how, being a tropical bird, it could possibly have kept warm through the severe changes of weather.

It is very evident that the bird knew how to provide for itself, and that it was provided for, even if not so completely as it might have been in its own country, where the fern-lands swarm with tropical insects of all kinds.

But we need not stop with the birds to observe how God provides for every creature, small as well as great. A member of the Entomological Commission of the United States tells us that there is not a forest tree which does not furnish amid its leaves and branches, or in its trunk under the bark, a perfect shelter for myriads of insects. He found, for example, that the oak tree alone sheltered and dined over three hundred species of insects, and he assumes that in every known tree like conditions exist.

Surely, if the tiniest insect, the weakest, tenderest fowl, are provided for so graciously, will He, the good Heavenly Father, fail to remember any of His children in their daily necessities? The more helpless and dependent

the human creature is, the more distinctly may we observe God's particular care. Go where you will, God provides for all—the fowl of heaven, the beast of the field, the fish of the sea, and for mankind in every clime, in every state.

XXIV

THE GREATEST BUILDER IN THE WORLD

OBJECT USED: A picture of the Eiffel Tower. With it, upon the blackboard, a drawing of the termite, or African white ant, and its hill. Representation of hill and ant can be found in a good Cyclopædia.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "Go to the ant; . . . consider her ways" (Prov. vi. 6).

IT seems extravagant to say that the termite, or African white ant, is, without doubt, the greatest builder in the world; yet such the following facts prove. This ant has its home in Africa, living in large numbers throughout that warm continent. Every ant-community is thoroughly organised, having, we are told, besides its regular classes of inhabitants, special classes of soldiers and builders. Latreille states that the new inhabitants added each year to a community number about thirty millions! Out of the whole number living together, the comparatively

large class called builders are the most interesting. These builders are without either wings or eyes, they being bestowed upon the other classes in the community. Yet they construct what may be well termed the most wonderful buildings in the world; for though these buildings, or cone-shaped hills, measure on the average only twelve feet in height, compared with the size and strength of the individual ant, any one of them is proportionately greater than either the Ferris Wheel or the Eiffel Tower, built by man!

Those of us who have seen the wheel or the tower, or both, were impressed with the thought that in them man has reached the possibilities of his engineering skill, so far, at least, as great height at the safe limit is concerned. What shall be said, therefore, to the work of the termite builder (he deserves a capital B), of whom a noted entomologist has said: "His cone-like building is of dimensions equal to one thousand times his length, he being but a quarter of an inch long. The Eiffel Tower, the most elevated monument of which human skill and industry can boast, is only one hundred and eighty-seven times the

average height of the worker. It is three hundred metres high, but to equal the termite's audacity it would have to attain a height of sixteen hundred metres!"

This termite structure, destined to give some bright engineer a working idea for building on the most colossal scale ever attained as yet by man, is well worth study. (Here display the blackboard representation of the Cyclopædia cut, showing interior as well as exterior construction.)

Observe the general shape of the structure, noting its singular-looking projections, somewhat like irregular, clumsy towers, giving the appearance, except for its towers, of an African hut. That you may know how firmly the whole building has been put together, bear in mind the size and weight of the heaviest ox you ever saw or heard of, and that he is able to get a footing on the top of the flattest parts —which are broader in the picture than they of necessity appear to be—and remaining there any length of time, without danger of crushing through.

The native African not infrequently climbs to the top of the termite house, and from that

point can keep sharp lookout, in time of danger, against the foes of his tribe. Likewise the leader of a herd of wild African cattle posts himself upon the termite house, finding a secure footing and a good view of surroundings.

The only material used by the termite is "earth softened in the jaws of the worker, which dries quickly and becomes very hard."

The interior of the cone is most intelligently constructed, with inner domes, supporting-pillars, spiral galleries leading to the ground, shorter passages leading everywhere—to the nurseries in which the little ants are kept, to the store-rooms and granaries, and to all entrances above or below ground.

The termite mother feeds her little ones upon bits of dried, crumbling wood, with occasional side-dishes of different kinds of tree-gum, and drinks of water and vegetable-juice. The dried wood is the staple article of their diet, while the gum and the juice, when furnished, serve the young termites in the place of sweetmeats, such as jam, sweets, and sugar.

Now it is this very appetite for wood which

makes the termite tribe useful in removing large quantities of dried, decayed material. But in many instances it seems to lead this ant to great destructiveness; for, leaving the old wood which he may always find in abundance, he attacks the fresh timbers in newly erected houses, eating out the fibre until the houses one after another become very unsafe, and must be repaired or taken down altogether.

We should like to stop to tell you of the termite soldier, that big ant, with great jaws and claws, who tears lazy workers that resist discipline all to pieces; who fights the ants of other tribes, and even birds and snakes. But we have given enough to show that when Solomon said, "Go to the ant," in order that we might "consider her ways" and so learn to be "wise," he had strong reason for giving us the advice.

XXV

HOW A SECRET SLIPPED OUT

OBJECT USED: We found this teaching sufficiently effective without an object. Still, should one be desired, no objection exists against its use, if appropriate.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "Your sin will find you out" (Num. xxxii. 23).

A NUMBER of years ago, in a European city, were gathered for an important council a large number of Church and State dignitaries. After the deliberations had been concluded, a sumptuous banquet was spread before the participants, at which sat some of the most distinguished men of history. Among them was a famous cardinal, who, when called upon to respond to a toast in honour of the Roman Catholic clergy, stated, among other things, that his very first penitent at the confessional was a murderer.

As he was concluding his address the door of the banquet-hall opened, and there

entered a well-known French duke, who was very popular at court. His entrance interrupted the cardinal's last sentence, and that prelate, in deference to the assembly, who greeted the duke with great applause, immediately took his seat.

Observing that he had caused an interruption, without knowing what the cardinal had been saying, the duke responded to his flattering reception with a very gracefully delivered speech. Bowing toward the cardinal, the duke, facing the assembly, said, "My lords and gentlemen, I have the honour of being the cardinal's first penitent, and therefore the first to receive absolution at his hands"!

The consternation which this unconscious confession produced among those present can be better imagined than described. The cardinal's face became deathly pale, the duke, meanwhile, proceeding with his speech, oblivious of the effect his criminating words had produced.

Thus a secret—at once a Church and State secret—had slipped out, by a simple, unpremeditated coincidence of speech!

What would not both cardinal and duke

have given to recall the words of that day! But the secret was out, to stay out. It could not be hidden again.

In the absence of any reasonable human explanation, except such as has been given, of this unhappy revelation — coincidence of speech, force of uncontrolled circumstance —we are compelled to feel that, it is indeed true, as our Scripture quoted above states, "Your sin will find you out."

In the same connection, we remember reading of the detection of yet another murderer, effected in a most remarkable way. (*Homiletic Review*, April 1895.)

Late in the autumn of 1894, on the island of Bermuda, a very prepossessing mulatto woman disappeared from her home. Suspicion was at once directed toward her husband, he being accused of having murdered her. No trace of the body, however, could be found; and after a while search was suspended, people generally believing that the woman's disappearance would never be accounted for.

One day a group of fishermen were quietly seated upon the shore overlooking what is known as the Long Bay Channel. A slight

but persistent breeze was ruffling the entire surface of the water, which in itself would attract no special attention at any time. But one of the group on the shore observed that at some distance out there was a long streak in the water which remained perfectly glassy. He at once, for some unexplained reason, connected the trivial fact with the disappearance of the mulatto woman, and instantly proposed an investigation. After a little delay, this was made, with the result that a full discovery of the crime and the husband's guilt was brought about.

The murderer, being a fisherman, had calculated that by sinking his wife's body with heavy weights to the bottom of the channel, under no ordinary circumstances could it regain the surface; and that after a short time the fish, which were very numerous, would easily destroy all possibility of identification.

All this scheming might have turned out as intended, but one point had been forgotten, the omission of which led to the discovery of the man's guilt. It never occurred to him that the devouring fish would liberate

the oilcells of the flesh, which, coming in contact with the surface, would spread, calming it in precisely the same manner that a cask of oil emptied into the sea stills its turbulence. Besides this, portions of the woman's clothing remained clinging to parts of the body, establishing her identity beyond all doubt. How true the words, "Your sin will find you out"!

Again, the insidious, all-pervading effect of hidden evil reveals itself by the disastrous results sure to follow, which are in themselves the revelation, the proof, of the evil so existing.

In the city of New York there stood, not long ago, a certain house, situated most pleasantly in the midst of the then new Harlem district, much of which was considered very desirable as either rentable or saleable property.

This house was occupied by several successive tenants, each one of whom, after a brief period, became suddenly and mysteriously ill. In two or three instances this illness proved fatal. Many and ingenious were the theories at first advanced by which it was

attempted to explain the cause for such an unusual condition of things. It was not until more recently, however, that the real cause of the trouble was discovered.

It seems, while the house was newly constructed and supposed to have as perfect sanitary appointments as existed in the city, that the land upon which the house was built had been originally a sunken lot. This lot, it was found, had been filled in and graded up with refuse dumpings brought by unscrupulous real-estate dealers from various parts of the city. Consequently disease of some sort was sure to develop sooner or later, to the danger of all occupants.

The only remedy, of course, which could be effectually applied to such a condition of things was to tear the house down entirely, remove the filling of refuse, and substitute good soil. This, accordingly, was done, although at a very large expense; all of which might have been avoided, sickness averted, and lives spared had the work of filling and grading been rightly, honestly done in the beginning.

It would be supposed that such an experi-

ence would teach men caution as to the need of thorough cleanliness and healthfulness in everything. But the following case shows the general criminal heedlessness with which many persons apparently console themselves that all will be well, when they know that it was not well at the start.

It was from another part of the Harlem district that there came, a little later, report of still another disease-smitten residence. This time people had a harder mystery to solve than before. All occupants of this house gave distinct evidence, strange to say, of arsenical poisoning.

At first it was supposed that someone living in the house was secretly administering the poison to the other inmates through their food. But chemical tests of various dishes made at different times, even to the drinking-water, elicited nothing wrong.

Once or twice a servant was arrested on suspicion, but almost as soon released. The trouble continued to grow worse, and with the consequent growing alarm grew the mystery.

At last a prominent chemist of the city, who had been quietly studying the newspaper

and other accounts given, called at the house, and requested permission to personally inspect it. As he was so well known this was readily granted. Almost the first thing he did upon gaining entrance was to begin an examination of, not the sanitary appointments, which were known to be correct, but the paper on the walls. This he did minutely, and, without disclosing his suspicions, took away with him several sections of the wall-paper found in the bed-rooms and the dining-room.

These he subjected to a careful examination in his private laboratory, with the result, as he had expected, that every sample of wall-paper was found to contain large quantities of pure arsenic, used in producing the various colours in them. This poison was particularly plentiful in the composition of the pink papers, one sample of which had enough arsenic on a square foot of it to destroy the life of an adult!

The fortunate discovery caused much excitement at the time, and many persons tore down their wall-papers—some, doubtless, without real cause—and substituted other styles of decoration. (See my article in the *Homiletic Review*, September 1894.)

The first incident, of the cardinal and the duke, shows unmistakably that a divine contingency—not a casualty, but a divine *touch*—is perceptible in the lives of evil men, sufficient to compel confession of wrong, and, let us hope, conducive in bringing them to true repentance, not before a priest, but before the Father in heaven.

The same irresistible divine power of all-revealing truth is seen in the incident of the Bermuda murderer. The third and fourth incidents disclose the subtlety of the question, "Is there any secret thing with thee?"

Take timely warning, boys and girls, from these accounts, each one of which is perfectly true, and keep your minds and hearts pure and fresh all through life, by living as God has directed you in His own holy Word.

XXVI

THE FACE OF GOD

OBJECT USED : A picture of Mount Lebanon in Palestine, or, more strictly speaking, the mountains of Lebanon.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS : "His countenance is as Lebanon" (Song of Solomon v. 15).

THE subtle difference of meaning between the word "face," as used in the heading of this chapter, and "countenance," employed in the Scripture selected, may be harmonised in the thought concerning God that, at the furthest, our conception of what His actual face is must be confined to what we know indicative of His disposition or state of mind, whether encouraging, approving, supporting, or otherwise; in other words, what is the expression of His "countenance."

King Solomon says, in his beautiful Song, that the countenance of the Divine "is as Lebanon"; that is, as it impressed itself upon his thought, he could compare the image in

his mind to nothing better than fascinating, sublime, glorious, irresistible Lebanon.

With a touch of Orientalism in his description of this surpassing mountain-range, someone, quoted by the late Dr. Philip Schaff, has written: "Lebanon is like a monarch, with a diadem of stars around his snowy turban, with his head in heaven and his feet upon the sea." But the unknown writer omits any thought touching the countenance of this mountain monarch.

Approaching a little nearer to this, however, is Goethe, writing of the Swiss Alps:

"Yesterday, brown was still thy head, as the locks of my loved one,
Whose sweet image, so dear, silently beckons afar.
Silver-gray is the early snow to-day on thy summit,
Through the tempestuous night streaming fast over thy brow."

Longfellow, in "Hyperion," wrote: "Earth has built the great watch-towers of the mountains, and they lift their heads far up into the sky, and gaze ever upward and around to see if the Judge of the world comes not!"

Poets that these authors are acknowledged to be, whether writing in verse or prose, they do not touch the simple grandeur of King

Solomon's truer thought, when he said, "His countenance is as Lebanon."

Lebanon is glorified beyond all physical beauties it may possess by such a sentiment. For God must excel all that He ever created. If Lebanon were like an Oriental monarch in his highest splendours, or like Goethe's Alps or Longfellow's "watching" mountains, to have Solomon say that he saw suggestions of God's countenance in that comparatively plain mountain-range of Palestine is to say something so wonderfully unique as to charm us at once.

The best view of Lebanon is doubtless from the Mediterranean, looking landward. Perhaps Solomon, when sailing in regal magnificence over its blue depths, so saw it, and it made him think of the face of God.

The modern tourist on the Mediterranean, sailing eastward toward the Palestinian promontory which, jutting into the sea, marks the end of the Lebanon range at that point, will be likewise fascinated by the sight. Everywhere — even far up the mountain-slope—springs richest verdure, revealing in the living green the thought of hope. Closer

views of the mountains disclose fruitful fig trees clinging to the bare rock, fairy-like vines climbing over ledges, mulberry trees in terraces adorning the general loveliness, while dark, olive-laden orchards fill out the shadowy recesses of the glens.

But all this, however lovely, is not the greatest beauty to be seen. If the tourist is out upon the Mediterranean in the early hour of sunrise, looking eastward still, he will observe what he cannot at any other time of day: the face of Lebanon lighted up with the first freshness and power of the sun. Up from the murmuring waters at their feet to the highest peaks, ten thousand feet above, the mountains of Lebanon flash like the towering glories of heaven, lights and shadows, colours and tints and hues, innumerable, eternal! Inexpressible in its fascinating, sunlit greatness, the sublimity of the scene—so full of absolute repose, of calm, steady, yet ever-changing life, as our eyes perceive one beauty after another—constrains us to echo the royal thought, and say, "If God's countenance is even like Lebanon, what must it in reality be!"

Almost unconsciously we glance away from the glory-lit heights before us down to the restless, shimmering waves about our boat. We look at them impassively awhile, for we are thinking, not of the complaining sea, but of Lebanon. Again our eyes seek its peaceful heights. Yes, the mountains are still keeping guard over the changeful world and us.

See those snow-filled, lightning-gleaming ravines, winding hither and thither through the mass and maze of piled-up earth and rock. "Glorious!" we exclaim, then sink in sadness, for the tongue finds no more speech. Who can resist the mountain's wondrous spell? Glories of the lower earth recede so fast, trailing purple shadows, like dew-bedrabbled court trains, up the mountain-side to evening's starlit halls!

Passing fisher-smacks and other craft glide dimly by. Our boatman sleeps. The day began in open eyes of heavenly dawn, and now it too steals once again to rest.

Lebanon and we alone keep vigil. We could not, if we would, find sleep. Yes, God watches there amid the stars. It is so blessed to lie here and watch with Him. How near

the mountains in these shadows seem!—then with another day recede again to yonder shore. So is the face of God: now near and bending close in brooding thought; then, mingling once again with the light of day, gives feature to the fleeting thing that fills our hour of life.

Let it be said to the teacher that the more thoroughly the geographical and poetical features of the Lebanon mountains are studied the more beautiful will they become. Do not fear that the child will fail to appreciate your most laborious, yet simplest, effort. God's face, dear teacher, has beauties for a child we, who are older, do not recall or even see.

XXVII

HOW I KNOW THAT GOD SEES ME

OBJECT USED : An aquarium with fish and plants.
SCRIPTURAL BASIS : "Thou God seest me" (Gen. xvi. 13).

WE all have heard of the astronomer who one day swung his telescope toward a distant hilltop and observed thereon a fine orchard, in which two boys were stealing apples.

Though an old story, it is a good one, because it carries the point that as the astronomer, of course unintentionally, spied the thieving boys, so God sees you and me at all times; for, as our Scripture implies, God is always looking.

Now the strange thing about this, boys and girls, is that, when we know we are doing right, we feel no fear of God's all-seeing eye; but when doing something known to be wrong, we would rather that God should not see us.

One day a well-known astronomer — not the same of whom the story just given is related—went up into the air many thousand feet in a very fine balloon. Everything had been arranged by him, before leaving for his aërial journey, to make a thorough investigation of the earth's appearance from a certain altitude.

His balloon was equipped with every latest improvement, so that he hoped to make a long and successful trip; and then, on coming down again, he could tell other scientists, anxiously awaiting his return, what new things he had seen.

Accompanying him was an able assistant, who states that as the balloon first rose from the earth a sense of growing power came upon him; his field of vision became wider and wider every moment as he continued slowly to ascend, until now his range, confined no longer to the usual limits, as when standing upon the earth, spread over fields and farms extending many miles in every direction. Then, rising higher, whole cities, in more or less irregular, smoky outline, became no larger than a small saucer. Towns and villages

dwindled into the most insignificant proportions, many scarce noticeable. Still rising with the balloon, the earth itself became like an inverted green bowl, upon the surface of which nothing could be distinguished but the highest mountains.

The observers began to realise that they were now higher than any persons known to science had ever gone. Instruments were produced from their cases and many valuable observations were taken. It was a time of intense interest. With some excitement one of the two said to the other, "I feel somewhat as God must feel looking down upon the earth —our position is so commanding in its vastness!"

Yes, boys and girls, God sees the whole world as in a moment of time; not a portion of it simply, as these balloonists saw it from their high altitude. God looks from heaven, which is everywhere about this little sphere, and sees everything and everyone.

But more than this is true also. Although God's view of the world is instant and complete both night and day, His perception, His immediate knowledge, is so inconceivably

beyond anything we could ever know in this life, that when we each say, "Thou God seest me," we utter more than we can ever convert into human knowledge. God always sees more in us than we can ever see in ourselves.

Here is an aquarium filled with water-plants, some bits of rock, and various kinds of fish. It is a little world in itself. Designing to have the fish content, the water is kept pure and fresh, and should any of these plants decay, they would be removed. As the fish swim about in the water, darting a moment under the leaves of the plants, then resting at the rock, we may observe their every motion. They cannot hide away. This little world before us is perfectly open to our sight.

See! there goes a queer-looking fish, rather large, but evidently finding plenty of room. Here, just at the other side of the glass, apparently pressing its funny little nose against it, is that familiar little creature from China, the goldfish; and with it, trying to push the goldfish away, is a silverfish. They are evidently expecting to be fed. We put a few crumbs upon the surface of the water.

Look! up they dart, and now they are contending for the morsels.

A word to the teacher. You must perceive the effectiveness of the illustration. It is capable of indefinite variety of treatment and of application. Even the babies three and four years old can thereby be taught, "Thou God seest me." If you can touch them, you have touched the elder and the eldest, until all will feel the truth which makes clear how it is that God can see all we do.

XXVIII

THE "RIBBAND OF BLUE"

OBJECT USED: A piece of blue ribbon, of fine colour.
SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "They put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue" (Num. xv. 38).

How soft, pleasant to the eye, a fine blue is! It is the colour seen in a flawless sapphire or turquoise, and in a clear sky.

No wonder, boys and girls, that blue is taken to express the fidelity of truth, the constancy of heaven.

A recent authority tells us that there are over one hundred varieties of this beautiful colour known to the artist, beginning with Alexandria-blue and ending with the blue of zinc-cobalt. The dyer and calico-printer, as well as the artist, delight in this marvellous variety. In fact, we all do. Henry Ward Beecher once said, "Life loves variety; God loves variety; and men do, when they are alive."

How many varieties of colours men and women wrought into the furnishings of the ancient tabernacle at God's own direction through Moses! How beautiful that tabernacle must therefore have been! Then, too, the garments of the priests, according to their rank of service, were full of colour.

And God did not forget the use of colour even among the great mass of Israel. So among other directions which He gave to Moses for the people was this: And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments, throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue." The object of this, as God explained, was "that ye may remember, and do all My commandments, and be holy unto your God." (See Num. xv. 38, 40.)

A beautiful, pleasant reminder of duty, indeed; was it not, boys and girls?

Jesus Himself said, you all know, "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light"; but He meant if the yoke, the burden, were carried in love for Him. Love lightens all

things, even the difficult duties of discipleship. Gentle as love for Christ is, it is an invincible defender against our heart's enemies. Pleasant as it may be, it also spurs remembrance, and thus helps us keep our duty in mind.

Love for Christ, then, is the "ribband of blue" in our daily lives. When we read Christ's Word daily, and pray to Him, alone, or in the worship hours of family, school, and religious society; when we seize opportunities for service upon every hand, we may say, "We do it because of the ribband of blue."

Thus blue is a colour fit for a king. Indeed, it is the badge of English royalty to-day.

So calls and reminders of Christly service are evidence of *our* royalty. The New Testament declares that we are "kings" ("and priests") unto the Most High. No matter who we are, whether our faces are white or brown or yellow or black or red, whether we speak this language or that dialect, if we are wearing the "ribband of blue"—have love for Christ in our lives—we thereby display our heavenly royalty.

Your royalty in Christ also shows that you possess power, authority. Ah, boys and girls,

the youngest child, loving Christ, wields a power, an authority, in the name of all that is eternal good, which Satan and the sinful heart cannot resist.

Mighty ribband of blue! Mighty love for Christ!

But remember, too, that he who wore the "ribband of blue" in Moses' time was known to be not a Jew only, but a devout Jew. God wanted *all* the people to wear it. No doubt they all did. Yet many even of Israel showed little true love in service. In their case the "ribband" was a mere pretence, a mockery of things sacred. Still, in the case of the faithfully loving, the "ribband of blue" was a beautiful emblem indeed. Many Christians to-day say they love Christ. They say they wear the "ribband of love, but how often is it as meaningless as a Pharisee's phylactery! Only as we *do* our duty, only as we fulfil the call of Christ, young friends, can we show our devotedness to Him.

Also bear in mind that, as has been intimated, blue in the sky is most beautiful to the eye when the atmosphere is clear, the day bright. Pure as the blue of a summer sky

should be our lives in Christ's service. Uncleanness of every sort, whether in thought, word, or deed, dulls, soils, the lovely "ribband" of love. "All the beauty and glory of Christ," once said Thomas à Kempis, "are manifested within, and there He delights to dwell; His visits there are frequent, His condescensions amazing, His conversations sweet, His comforts refreshing; and the peace that He brings passeth all understanding."

Love Him, my child, and you will find this true.

XXIX

WOOD-GRAINS

OBJECT USED: Blocks of wood, of convenient size, freshly sawed, showing the grain. Only three or four specimens of the best-known woods are necessary. Oak, ash, birch, and pine are easily obtained.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of My sanctuary; and I will make the place of My feet glorious" (Isa. lx. 13).

HERE are several blocks of wood, fresh from the saw-mill. You may wonder what is to be learned from them. But no boy or girl should pass through life without cultivating that habit of observation which sees in most insignificant, uninteresting things something to admire, something worth study.

Though these are blocks of wood simply, take close notice of the delicate, variegated beauty in the grain of each piece.

See this piece of oak wood? The graining is just as you will find it in the heart of any good

oak, for this piece has been cut from the finest oak we could get. These soft, light lines, rippling through the wood, remind one of the rippled surface of a tropic lake stirred by the sigh of a flower-laden zephyr; so gently touched that not a ripple obscures the sun-rays shining straight through, revealing countless lesser lines and waves beneath, bringing to the mind thought of yet another world, which thus in miniature discloses mingled unrest and calm.

Do you say that you cannot see it? Look closer, then. Perhaps no one has ever told you, young friends, that these fine pencillings through the oak are not alone due to the arrangement of its growing fibre, but to the power of the sun, which is able to shine into the heart of the tree and leave its beautiful tracings of light there. Yes, there they are. The rays of the sun are photographed upon the very fibre of the great oak's heart!

Then here is a piece of ash. Look at it through a magnifying-glass and it will be many times lovelier than to the unaided eye. To the latter this graining appears like a tiny rainbow, without distinct colour, yet full of its

own peculiar beauty. Beneath this massive arch of lines observe the lighter ones, more separated from one another, but with astonishing precision of parallel. Now use the glass and you will see wide, seed-like lines, perfectly distinguishable.

Yes, this also is the work of the all-powerful sun. "How beautiful Nature is!" we say. True, but never more so than when we look into her heart.

This third piece of wood is from the birch. Boys, you have gone into the woods or down by the shaded river to find a birch tree, for the purpose of stripping some of its bark, which, indeed, has no unpleasant taste. See how the birch tree appears at the heart of its savoury life. Uniform as the lines appear, there is a not unimpressive beauty in them. Notice the patches of birch-pith; yet even these do not cause one single sun-tracing to deviate, but each tracing in its place, side by side with myriads like it, spreading fan-like from a natural centre, tells us again that the power of the sun affects the life of a tree from centre to circumference.

So we might go on through an infinite

variety of woods, each specimen revealing yet more and more what Dr. Byron Halstead says is the true sunshine of the woods.

But this interesting study would fail of its purpose did we not here see an unmistakable analogy to God's sunlight in the human heart.

Oh, happy boy and girl are you if you can say, "God's light shines through my life, and helps me, when I am disturbed and full of darkening thought, to see that His power and love and grace never change in their all-penetrating, glory-giving directness."

Yes, amid the deviating lines of the heart's ever-expanding, growing life, God's grace should be found enshrined, like sunshine in nature's forest-heart. So in His love—His grace-lit love—your life will be one sparkling song, which wastes nothing though it bubbles over with intensest happiness.

> "Better to have the poet's heart than brain,
> Feeling than song; but better far than both,
> To be a song, a music of God's making."
>
> George MacDonald, *Within and Without.*

XXX

OUT OF DARKNESS

OBJECT USED: Two glass globes, of small size, one of them made black. When ready, in the course of the teaching, put a lighted candle within the blackened globe. If the globe has been heavily blackened, the light, of course, will not shine through. As the teaching proceeds, remove the candle, still alight, to the other globe. The light will be seen by all.

The globe made black represents the life of sin; the clear globe the life cleansed and illumined. The lighted candle typifies the light of truth—God's Spirit.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "The light shineth in darkness" (John i. 5). "Create in me a clean heart, O God" (Ps. li. 10).

MUCH has been said and much written regarding the nature and degree of sin in the human heart. Leaving that discussion, with its many difficulties, we urge the teacher to rather impress upon the mind and heart of the child the difference between a state of sin and a state of pure, Christ-like living. Any attempt to explain this, however, in a so-called "theological way" will only tend to

befog and mislead the young mind addressed. Take, therefore, an incident which shows, first, a state of darkness in mind and heart, merged by patient, successful effort into a state of light, life, and joy.

Such an incident may, in part at least, be found in the experience of the late Dr. Edward Seguin. (See article in the *Homiletic Review*, January 1895, p. 60.)

This wonderful physician, whose authority upon diseases of the mind is not questioned, believing that mental darkness, one form of which was known as idiocy, could be dispelled, set patiently to work to prove his theory. With what success all the world to-day knows.

Eight years he toiled unremittingly upon the firm belief that idiocy was not caused by mental deficiency, as had been supposed, but by the *arrest of mental development*. No one will ever know how severe was the labour which the demonstration of this truth required; yet Seguin worked through those eight years with only such scant encouragement as one successful experiment out of one hundred failures afforded. From early

morning till late night he sought to inculcate something — if not more than the merest beginning of an idea—into the thought of the mentally helpless.

On one occasion, which furnishes only one instance out of many, he succeeded in getting an idiot girl to make a certain gesture correctly, although, simple as it was, she had failed literally one hundred times and more. But the one correct gesture was like a gleam of hope.

He pursued the feeble yet correct effort with almost infinite patience, until at last he was rewarded with the *full restoration* of all the patient's mental powers.

Many recognised the worth of his discovery at once. Science and humanity had seen another ray of light.

Since the time of the successful termination of this experiment, scores of institutions have been erected in various parts of the world for no other purpose than the training and recovering of the darkened mind, all of them, of course, modelled after the theory and practice of Dr. Edward Seguin.

This life in medical annals is an instructive,

working example for every Christian teacher seeking to deliver the darkened heart, as well as mind, from the bondage of sin.

With equal patience and fidelity, attended by the aid of the Holy Spirit, many an earnest gospel labourer, a spiritual physician, has aroused the darkened soul to full moral and spiritual vigour.

So long as God's own Spirit will aid our effort (and has He not promised to do so?) it need not be said that spiritual deficiencies cannot be brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light.

The child living in the midst of sinful surroundings is a plea in himself for the giving of guiding suggestion and encouragement to those whose minds and hearts are struggling for the divine truth. God forgive us if we have neglected one little lamb that has strayed away from the fold, and that, wounded and shelterless in the world's wide wilderness, is crying for help.

Modify our thought as we may, the truth remains for every teacher to consider that full restoration of a child's dormant spiritual nature is possible; but possible only by the

Spirit, through that kind friend and teacher who will be patient, persistent, and hopeful through *every* discouragement. Remember—oh, remember—that with many a poor, ill-understood, abused child, his and her lack of spiritual appreciation lies in this, and this only: in *arrest* of moral and spiritual development.

Severe. good teacher, may be your labour; but the Light—Jesus, the Light of the world—your Lord and ours, will help you.

Without further argument, apply the force of the "object used," as suggested at the beginning of this chapter.

XXXI

A CRYSTAL FOR YOU

OBJECT USED : Crystals—any kind obtainable.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS : "The crystal cannot equal it" (Job xxviii. 17). See also the eighth chapter of the Book of Proverbs.

WE have here in hand a number of crystals of varied sort, selected from different grades, kinds, and sizes. They are crystals of ordinary rock-quartz.

Others, more difficult to obtain, but very beautiful, and all of quartz, are amethystine (bluish violet), asteriated (having coloured star-like radiations), cat's-eye, citrine (yellow, much like a topaz), milky, rose (rose-coloured or pink), sapphire (dark or indigo blue), and smoky (more or less black).

At the close of the exercises the boys and girls may come to the platform and examine them.

There are not many references in the Bible

that may be strictly applied to the crystal. The few we mention, however, are interesting. Ezekiel (i. 22) speaks of ice under the figure of the "terrible crystal." John, in his apocalyptic vision (Rev. iv. 6), saw "a sea of glass like unto crystal"; and another verse of the Revelation, familiar to every lover of God's Word (xxii. 1), describes the river of the water of life, "clear as crystal."

Then in the Book of Job we have the expression selected as our "scriptural basis."

Wisdom! Crystals! Beautiful, indeed, is the associated thought these words convey.

But first let us have clear definitions of "wisdom" and of "crystals." Concerning wisdom, Job, in the last verse of the twenty-eighth chapter, defines it as "the fear of the Lord." This, of course, is the very highest wisdom—reverence for the Lord. To this wisdom, as Job declares, no crystal, however perfect, can be equal. Concerning the crystal, the best, latest authority, though somewhat technical, says, "It is that solid, mathematical form, included under plane surfaces, systematically arranged and connected by angles of fixed and definite value, which a chemically

homogeneous substance tends to assume by undisturbed growth." A long as well as scientific definition. But it will repay the teacher to simplify it for the children; for he will notice that this authority evidently recognises the *divine thought* in the creation of the crystal. How, otherwise, would the crystal "*tend to assume*" its form?

Looking again at these crystals, we observe that, after all, they are only the form and structure of certain substances in Nature which have no life in themselves, while wisdom is the form and structure, so to speak, of certain definite things in the thought of the mind, of the heart, and of the soul, which possess life—divine life. So the crystal expresses perfection of the lifeless, while wisdom, defined, that which is most symmetrical, solid, harmonious, in all *life*.

Having noticed the perfection of form, the beauty of structure, in these crystals, the interior corresponding with the exterior, see these parallel lines in this fine one. Some of these lines are so delicate that you cannot see them without a magnifying-lens. The geologist calls them lines of cleavage; that

means, the lines along which the crystal is divided, and upon which it may be most easily cleft or split open.

There are a few acids or solutions which have the power to dissolve many forms of crystals, and are almost entirely destructive to various kinds. But upon this we need not dwell here.

God has appointed, so science reveals, six systems by which He creates every possible form of the crystal, of whatever sort or kind. These are called the systems of crystallisation, starting with the square as a basis. Within these systems every form of crystal derived is related, in some way more or less direct, to every other form.

Then notice in these coloured crystals that the colour, as well as every other feature, seems to be arranged about a central line. This line is the axis of the crystal. Somewhere upon this line or axis, we assume, first began the process of crystallisation in this stone. (Hold one up.) At least this is, we believe, the general law. And it is this law which makes all the variety of colour, form, structure, and kind, one.

In applying all these facts about the crystal, let it distinctly appear that the highest wisdom, which is the fear of God, not only excels the power of the crystal to express the perfection of earthly things, but that such wisdom alone can give to the higher life of the moral and spiritual nature its truest perfection.

Again, be particular to show that the crystal cannot be compared with this wisdom—this daily, worshipful reverence for God—because, despite all divisions (cleavage) in opinion, doctrine, creed—separations by reason of differences in early education and training—true wisdom will survive to all eternity; while the crystal must sooner or later be broken, destroyed. Whatever the principles of its creation, the form of the crystal is passing; but this wisdom is from everlasting to everlasting.

So, also, impress a final comparative teaching, namely, that as all varieties of crystals are, after all, essentially one, so racial and inter-racial distinctions among men—their divisions and groups according to colour, language, country, and occupation—find one common line of destiny, flow back to one

central source—which is God, who is not only the origin of all wisdom, but is Wisdom.

Surely, then, the crystal He Himself made could not excel the divine thought that produced it. Likewise all earthly loveliness and treasure must yield before the clear, symmetrical, harmonious beauties of the reverent, worshipping soul.

"Wisdom is only in truth," wrote Goethe; and, adds Langford, in an essay, "The only jewel which you can carry beyond the grave is wisdom."

Let us conclude with the words of Willis, in "The Scholar of Thibet" (Ben Khorat) (Part II.):

> "Wisdom sits alone,
> Topmost in heaven. She is its light, its god;
> And in the heart of man she sits as high—
> Though grovelling eyes forget her oftentimes,
> Seeing but this world's idols. The pure mind
> Sees her forever: and in youth we come
> Fill'd with her sainted ravishment, and kneel,
> Worshipping God through her sweet altar-fires,
> And then is knowledge 'good.'"

XXXII

THE CHRISTMAS STAR

(A Fancy)

OBJECT USED: A small gold star.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "There are last which shall be first" (Luke xiii. 30).

HAVE you ever sat by the deep rolling sea on a starlight night.

If so, as you lay in the soft, warm sand, your eyes upon the heavens above, flashing back their myriad golden messages according to your own sweet fancy, did you ever hear the planets tell the story of the Christmas Star?

I heard it once, and will tell it to you, for I never have forgotten it.

Sweet Nenetta[1] first breathed its secret, which at first I could not well believe; then

[1] Nenetta is one of the minor planets, discovered in 1890.

thought, "Why should it not be so? Nenetta tells me no untruth, though she is a planet so young that I might easily accuse her of idle dreaming." And since she told me that she herself saw the Christmas Star that shone o'er Bethlehem's manger on earth's first Christmas night, and heard the story from the star itself, how dared I say that it was false?

"Yes," said Nenetta, "I know the truth; no mortal must deny my tale."

"Oh, tell it, then," I said, impatient now to hear.

So she began—

"Long ere the Christ-child came to earth it was known among the angel host that some star would be selected to convey the tidings of the Saviour's advent to wise men of the Orient. The angels told this to the planets, great and small, and we talked about it with the stars.

"I need not tell you that the stars were jubilant over this intelligence. In delighted companies and groups and clusters they gathered, and from morning until night—first a cluster, then a group, then a company,

then all together—sang the eternal praise of the Creator.

"Oh, mortal, 'twas a wondrous song!

"We planets never thought the stars possessed such powers of music.

"While the stars were singing, we saw the archangel fly from out the inner heaven toward the nearest star. It paled as he approached, and as we looked he passed it by, and, flying on, left every star behind, winging his way into the silent north."

Here Nenetta paused, glanced at the North Star, and smiled. The star returned the greeting with a joyous light upon its face, and Nenetta then resumed—

"Yes, the North Star saw the angel coming; but Michael passed it by also, and the North Star could not see where he had gone.

"Stars and planets now awaited his return in breathless expectation. We had not long to wait. No angel flies so swift, so strong, as Michael flies.

"And when he came he bore upon his hand a little star—one no star nor planet in all the heavens had ever seen before.

"Straight to the throne the archangel flew. And as God looked upon the Little Star it grew so bright that every watching star and planet veiled its face.

"Then God said, 'The Little Star is too bright for heaven. Send it forth unto the earth, that it may tell to wise men and to shepherds of the birth of Christ, My Son.'"

Again Nenetta paused, and with a blush upon her lovely face withdrew ere I could bid her tell me more. I wondered long at this; until Dembowska,[1] a younger planet, smiled and said, "Nenetta blushes and withdraws because she will not tell the quarrel the stars had among themselves after God had sent the Little Star so bright to herald to the earth the advent night."

"How did the quarrel end?" I asked.

"Oh, Jupiter, the mighty planet, quelled it well," Dembowska said, with reverent mien. "He simply said, 'I heard the eternal Spirit once declare, "THERE ARE LAST WHICH SHALL BE FIRST."'"

How long I'd lain upon the sands I cannot

[1] Dembowska, also a minor planet, was discovered in 1892.

tell; for when I fell asleep, hushed by the gentle murmur of the sea, I dreamed of wise men and the Little Star. When I awoke 'twas Christmas morn, and o'er the earth a radiance shone that came I knew not whence.

XXXIII

LITTLE MR. DISCONTENT

OBJECT USED: A picture of a little boy with a discontented look upon his handsome face.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Phil. iv. 11).

AMONG the beautiful hills of Surrey there once lived a prosperous farmer who had an only son. This son he was very anxious to train as a farmer. But the boy had a very cross disposition, and was never content with anything; and as to farming, declared that it was not fit for one with such abilities as he. Although this boy was not very young in years, he was so small of stature that his neighbours and playmates dubbed him, knowing his disposition, "Little Mr. Discontent." He resented this at first, but after a little while appeared to have accepted it, with less ill-nature than, perhaps, might have been expected.

As time went by Little Mr. Discontent's father, seeing that his son grew more and more restless and unhappy, even at times refusing absolutely to do the most ordinary work, easy enough for anyone, proposed to the young man that he go to the neighbouring city and learn a trade.

At first young Discontent said yes; then demurred, but would not tell why. So, taking him sharply in hand, exercising his parental authority to elicit an answer, the father discovered that his discontented son would not be satisfied unless he had an opportunity to become a merchant.

So to the city of London he was sent, his father, perhaps foolishly, starting him at once independently in the soap business.

Despite his youth and inexperience the young man seemed at the beginning to succeed admirably. His father, of course, was highly pleased, and told several of his neighbours that he guessed they would have to drop calling his son "Mr. Discontent" any more; "for," said he, "there is no happier boy alive than he in his city shop."

But the father spoke too soon.

One day there came to the young man's establishment in London a great lord, to buy soap. And as the young merchant was compelled to bow and scrape before his lordship, the old spirit of discontent came back stronger than ever. He now wished himself anything but a soap maker and seller.

"The horrible, greasy, ill-smelling business!" said he to himself, after the proud, magnificently attired lord had re-entered his conveyance and was gone. "I never liked it, and I never will—no, I never will."

In this frame of mind he retired to his inner office, grumbling at himself and all the world. He threw himself into his chair after drawing the bolt in the door, and gave himself over to moody reflections.

The day had been very hot, and the air of the office became oppressive. Soon Little Mr. Discontent was fast asleep. And as he slept, he dreamed.

The soap establishment had given place to a most lordly castle, through which he moved, its sole master. Riches were plentiful, servants in abundance. Everything he ever had wished for was placed before him.

The high and noble graced his festive board. He was courted, petted, flattered. He became the king's most trusted councillor. Once he thought of the farm and the old folks at home; but as he never saw them among the glittering company at his castle's gates, he soon forgot them and passed on to other things.

But though he was a lord at last, and rich and powerful, he was still as discontented as ever. Nor would he be content, he knew, until he had become the Prime Minister of England. He interviewed his friends, proposed this law and that, posed as the friend of all the poor, and yet the friend of all the rich. He planned, cajoled, worked every scheme he knew, till, strange to say, Prime Minister he became.

But, stranger still, no sooner had he received this superior distinction than he found that he was no more contented with his lot than he had been before.

Again the scene changed, and now we find that he has indeed become the king. Yes, at last, the king!

We look for his parents. They are not

to be seen. We ask this king to tell us where his kind father is. He gruffly answers that he does not know nor care.

Oh, shame upon you, Little Mr. Discontent!

Still the dream goes on, for Mr. Discontent will not awake so long as he may dream of things he cannot ever have, and is not worthy to possess.

Now the king is on a hunt, and all the game is driven by his courtiers toward his hiding-place, that he may shoot the helpless creatures to his heart's content. A storm arising sweeps the open with a drenching rain. The lightnings strike the trees and shiver them in flying splinters. Terrified, the king seeks shelter, and, after finding it, fumes fretfully, not that he has lost the pleasure of the hunt, but because the rain-storm is a mightier power than he.

"To think that I, the king, must fly before the storm like this! Absurd!"

Suddenly it grew very, very dark. Then Little Mr. Discontent felt himself rising with the wind, until he rode upon the clouds, driving the storm-king's chargers where he would.

He had become the storm indeed. Savagely he lashed the seas and rivers till they roared and hissed and dashed themselves in mad despair. He hurled the lightnings, and the thunders he rolled about with wildest glee.

"Now I am at last content. Ha! ha! What can I ask for more? I can flood the world if I take a notion, so I might as well prove my powers by doing so at once."

How the rain fell! Days and nights passed, and still it fell. The storm-king raged in mad delight. But what is this? Why does not the earth begin to sink down into space, so filled with ceaseless raining? He tries again and then again. He will not end till he has washed the earth away.

Yet see! rage as he will, the rivers, though running high, and sad destruction everywhere, flow to the sea, and the sea takes in the floods as fast as he can pour them down. The earth drinks in the waters till its wells and springs are filled.

Weary of the sight, the storm-king rests. He is tired of the very sight of water. He feels the sea is equal in its vastness to his cyclonic strength; yet he would not be the

sea, for ever lashed between the coast-lines of the world. No, no; to satisfy his discontent he'll be the earth itself.

This now he finds he has become. He is the earth! With the first real sigh of contentment he ever uttered in all his life, he turns lazily upon his side and sleeps as he has not slept before.

Scrape, scrape; pick, pick; thump, thump —why, what is it? The sleeping earth awakes, looks up, and sees a farmer bending to his work.

"Say, farmer, who is master here?"

But the farmer works on, and soon the earth finds that it yields to his untiring arm, until the harvests are all gathered in.

"Who is my master, I should like to know," cries Mr. Discontent; "this farmer with the hoe?"

Rap, rap—someone at the office door: another customer to buy soap.

The dream is ended. Mr. Discontent, the London soap-merchant, awakes, rubs his eyes, and starts to his feet. He opens the office door and runs against his father in the passage-way.

"Oh, father, is it you? I am so glad you've come."

With some astonishment the old man permits himself to be drawn into the office. What has come over his son? The discontented tone in his voice is there no longer. Little Mr. Discontent is Mr. Discontent no more. As he afterward told his father, "That dream cured me."

There is to-day in Surrey a fine farm-land belonging to a young man, of rather short stature, whom the neighbours used to call Little Mr. Discontent. He laughs a bright, cheery laugh when anyone asks him about that name, and then you must listen to the story of a dream that had the power to change a discontented life into a good and happy one.

XXXIV

IN THE LIGHT OF THE LANTERN

OBJECT USED: A small lantern, lighted.
SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps. cxix. 105).

THE Jew of David's day would have understood the word "lamp" to signify a flame or torch such as was carried in the hand at night by the traveller, or by a soldier on the march —in short, a lamp-torch. Other passages, again, would show that there was in use among Orientals of that early time a sort of swinging lamp, which, carried by a chain or strap, would bring the light close down to the moving feet, at the same time serving as a light upon the path over which a person might happen to be moving in his journey.

To us in modern times the psalmist's figure is not readily understood, since we are so accustomed to our broad streets lighted by gas

or electricity, many of them, indeed, illumined with a wonderful brilliance. Enough, however, may be gathered of the nature of the Oriental lamp to impress upon our thought two leading ideas, namely:

First, the Bible, as a light-giving source, illumines the place in which we stand, so that we may perceive what is the next step to take —a lamp that moves with us.

Second, the light of this lamp is a fixed light, as a candle or burning wick is fixed within the lamp.

It is therefore correct to speak of a fixed, moving light.

This may at first seem unnecessary to point out; but in the fixedness, yet moving quality, of the Bible light we have a revealing guide which meets every exigency of human experience. Lacking either quality, the Bible would be an ineffectual light. Thus, were it simply fixed like a candle in its stick, we could walk in its rays no farther than that fixed light would shine. We could not carry it with us. The Bible would never be a daily companion. Or were it simply a light carried on a journey, without fixedness, it would be extinguished at

the moment a rough place in the way caused uneven, faltering progress.

How necessary, boys and girls, such a light as this light of God's Word is!

The night of life is so dark about us all, because of sin, we need a light that we can carry with us.

The way is so new, unfamiliar, crooked oftentimes, we must have a light that will not fail us by going out when wanted most.

Many times have we heard persons say, to change the figure of our thought, "The Bible is like a lighthouse." We answer "Yes, as a *fixed* light it is like a lighthouse, but beyond that the comparison does not hold. There is a point far out at sea at which the keenest-sighted sailor cannot guide his ship by the aid of lighthouses." More appropriate, then, would be the expression, "The Bible is like a light in the binnacle, shining upon the needle in the compass-box." The light in the binnacle is a light fixed where it is most required, yet moves with the moving ship.

Observe, also, the material burned in the lamp or lantern. It was always olive-oil, and nothing else—symbol of the Holy Spirit.

In lighthouses, as everyone has read, wood was the first material used for illuminating purposes. Then came an improvement by the substitution of coal. Later, candles were used. Then followed the introduction of oil, with Argand burner and glass chimney, which marked an era in lighthouse illumination. This, however, was again improved upon by the employment, in some lighthouses, of gas. To-day the use of electricity acting upon carbon-points would appear to mark an ultimate triumph.

But the oil of the Bible lamp is the same that has ever been the means of widening the efficiency of the truth. God's Holy Spirit has not ceased to labour, until to-day, through a progress as rapid as it has been wonderful, the blaze and glory of gospel light illumines the mariner's dark night upon life's tempestuous waters—streaming from the lighthouse, shining in the binnacle.

Boys and girls, we all must have the Bible in our lives—a fixed light; but so fixed that you and I may carry its saving truth with us for every personal, particular direction.

A gentleman once said that the Bible was

good enough for direction sometimes, but not always; and to prove his point said further:

"It is like this. One season, I, with several bushmen, was in an African jungle. We had started on a long hunt for elephants; but after a time, becoming entangled in a country unfamiliar even to the bushmen, we were compelled to confess that we were lost.

"I had with me a pocket-compass, and a sextant such as is used at sea; also a star-chart. While the compass was all right, the sextant was useless unless we could get some glimpse of the stars—a thing impossible in an African jungle, where the trees are so dense that at night not a ray gleams in. The pointing of the compass only added to our distress, as, without the information gained by the sextant and the star-chart, any direction we might decide upon from the compass was liable to cause our getting farther and farther away from the right track. Now the Bible helps somewhat, like our compass, but it will not show the way of deliverance in every case."

This gentleman, whom we will not name, might win his argument did we not happen to

know a fact that he does not relate regarding that very hunting expedition. All he did tell, as given above, was true enough; but when they were all in apparent hopelessness, one of the bushmen suggested that the gentleman mentioned climb one of the tallest trees about them, until from its high branches he could observe the stars and make his calculations governing the question as to their exact locality. This happy thought was immediately put into execution. The gentleman ascended the tallest tree he could find, taking his sextant, slung from the shoulder by a strap. He soon finished his observations, reconsulted the compass, and in a few days brought his party to a familiar region.

There are heights in God's Word from whose summits we may read the stars of God's promises, which will tell us, with such other aids—reason, common sense, pointing of circumstance, and the like—as God has given every one of us, all we need to know for our safe and speedy deliverance from *every* perplexity and danger.

These heights are not tree heights. They are mountain heights—sublime, transporting!

XXXV

TWELVE JEWELS RADIANT

OBJECT USED: A representation, in proper colours, of the breastplate of the Jewish high priest, such as conceived by Mr. George F. Kunz, gem expert for Messrs. Tiffany & Co., New York, and which, under his direction, was originally prepared for the *Standard Dictionary*, and may be found facing page 750 in the single-volume edition of that work. Any person can work out the design as there given upon a blackboard or sheet of drawing-paper, if sufficiently skilful with coloured crayon.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: Ex. xxviii. 15–29. See also the latter part of the fourteenth verse of the sixth chapter of Ephesians.

WE must say at the outset that the teacher using this subject will lose a great deal of its beauty if he fails to procure the exact object suggested. A single glance of an appreciative eye at such an object will fix for ever the lesson the teacher seeks to impress. Indeed, that object is far more suggestive than any words of the author of this book could possibly be. See it and be convinced.

Having secured your object, note that it follows with absolute faithfulness, so far as may now be known, the directions once given to Moses for the making of the high priest's breastplate.

That, as originally planned and executed, it must have been of incomparable beauty is hinted in an old tradition handed down by the Jewish historian Josephus, who, in his third book of *Antiquities*, says:

"God declared beforehand by those twelve stones which the high priest bare on his breast, and which were inserted into his breastplate, when they should be victorious in battle; for so great a splendour shone forth from them before the army began to march, that all the people were sensible of God's being present for their assistance. Whence it came to pass that those Greeks who had a veneration for our laws, because they could not possibly contradict this, called the breastplate the Oracle. Now this breastplate left off shining two hundred years before I composed this book, God having been displeased at the transgression of His laws."

Four rows of jewels: a sardius, a topaz,

and a carbuncle in the first; an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond in the second; a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst in the third; and a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper in the last. Twelve jewels radiant!

No wonder Josephus said they shone with a supernatural light, for no doubt, to his eye, the singular beauty of the breastplate, because divinely patterned, was more of heaven than of earth.

In the letter to the Ephesians, Paul speaks of the breastplate of righteousness. Turn now to his letter to the Galatians and read in the fifth chapter from verses 22 to 26 inclusive. What are the names of the "stones" in this New Testament breastplate? They are love, joy, and peace; long-suffering, gentleness, and goodness; faith, meekness, and temperance; sacrifice (verse 24), holiness (verse 25), and humility (verse 26).

If for any reason the teacher prefers an object less elaborate than that suggested at the beginning of this chapter, let a square be drawn upon the board, representing the breastplate of righteousness. Within the square put four rows of squares, from left

to right, three squares in a row, the twelve squares filling in the entire square first drawn. In each of the squares write one of the names of the "stones," given as above from Galatians.

This will furnish a good object whereby to impress the truth that the fruits of the Spirit in the heart of a child, and manifested in its life, are the breastplate of righteousness, whose "twelve jewels radiant" are a more glorious evidence of God's presence in a child's character than ever could be true of that traditional radiance Josephus describes in his account of the Jewish breastplate.

The teacher must elaborate the twelve "stones" according to personal judgment. Elaborate them until the fruits of the Spirit shine with radiance divine.

"What stronger breastplate than a heart untainted."
Henry VI., Part II., act III., sc. ii.

XXXVI

WHAT THE ROSE SAID

OBJECT USED: A rose.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: "And the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose" (Isa. xxxv. 1).

> "It never rains roses; when we want
> To have more roses, we must plant more trees."
> GEORGE ELIOT, *Spanish Gypsy*, Book III.

THERE are many ways of treating this subject, since the thought of the "rose," like its own fragrance, fills every pathway of approach.

The rose suggests variety. So you may make the subject bloom like a veritable garden in which all kinds of roses grow; or, if you will, leave the garden, with its countless fascinations, and go in thought with Isaiah to the desert, and witness there the transforming power of grace divine, by which the arid waste becomes like the garden you have for the moment left.

There are more than one hundred and

eighty species of roses, it is claimed, though only thirty of these are admitted as really genuine by the best authorities. They grow in the deserts here and there, on the broad prairie, and even in the swamp; adapting themselves to every climate, whether in the north or south, and from east to west.

So there are many methods, under God's all-directing Spirit, by which the sin-wastes of earth may be redeemed unto a life surpassing even that of the fairest flower. Though only comparatively few methods are considered successful, God's truth, apart from every human reason, will grow in the deserts here and there, on the broad prairie, and even in the swamp—the slum of human life.

It is a wide-reaching truth indeed, yet weighted with the sweetness of humility, which, like the fine red rose, breathes of truest devotion. For, as Theudobach well wrote:

> "When a rose is too haughty for heaven's dew,
> She becometh a spider's gray lair;
> And a bosom that never devotion knew,
> Or affection divine, shall be filled with rue
> And with darkness, and end with despair."

It is, then, the spirit of devotion living in waste places that transforms their desolateness. Our missionary annals, home and foreign, would furnish abundant testimony. The teacher seeking illustrative material under this point will find a mine of exhaustless, fascinating riches.

Establish the spirit of devotion, and soon men breathe a new atmosphere—the atmosphere of heaven, up into which their powers may expand with truer beauty than poet ever saw in new-born rose.

It is the popular opinion that the soils of an arid region (see *The Homiletic Review* May 1894, p. 446) are incapable of product without enrichment. But in many instances quite the contrary is true.

It has been stated that the soils of arid regions are generally *fertile to excess.* Depletion, rather than accretion, tends to their improvement.

One thing only is lacking to make most arid lands fruitful, and that is water — simply water.

Now water, as we all know, is one of the most easily obtained, available elements in

Nature. First, by the precipitation of rain and snow. Warm rains are the type of blessings which fall in times of general prosperity. Cold snows, afterward changing with the season into melted floods, streaming down from mountain heights above the cloud-line and below, through the valleys, over the plains, passing cities and towns, villages and fields, on their blessing-laden course to the boundless sea—these, born of snow and ice, are blessings of adversity.

Again, water is obtained by engineering contrivances. The engineer *studies* a situation; then by the most effectual means brings the waters to the places where they are wanted.

Study the situation in the spiritual desert; then by the most effectual means God ever gave to man—by faith and prayer and work—bring gospel waters to the places where they are wanted. The higher the reservoir of truth is placed, the more exalted, noble, Christ-like is the individual character in these deserts, the more commanding over lesser lives, flowing to them with a ceaseless graciousness of love.

Many times, in dry regions where water

must be had, and no better engineering device avails, catch-basins to gather surplus rain-water are constructed. Again, when no rain falls for many months at a time, engineers seek out and utilise subterranean channels, giving rise to that happy discovery, combined with pure inventive genius — the artesian well.

The point of value in all these various contrivances lies in the fact that arid places—deserts—are developed into blooming gardens. Remember the Greely colony in northern Colorado, so far transforming arid land there as to be able to-day to comfortably sustain a little city of from two to three thousand inhabitants. The history of irrigation — in other words, the history of transforming the desert into a rose-garden—in California alone is so voluminous that we could not give the facts the treatment they warrant. Los Angeles, San Diego, and other counties of that blooming State attest the enormous benefits to the country at large, derived from simple methods of bringing water to parched and thirsty lands. The "Valley of Death," in New Mexico—a plain hemmed in by almost

impassable alkaline cliffs—now irrigated by artesian wells, has been redeemed and lives in verdant beauty.

In 1886 Montana was in despair over her arid lands. To-day she is rejoicing, with her awakening deserts fast blooming as the rose, because she too has learned Nature's lesson.

In Australia, lies what once was known as the Great Central Desert, then uninhabitable, now supporting easily vast herds of cattle. Irrigation solved the question of its utility.

In Egypt we are redeeming by the same method many sand-wastes, increasing Egypt's cotton and sugar products.

In all these instances we observe that as irrigation increases, dews occur where formerly they were unknown! The whole atmosphere in these regions produces a better agricultural condition.

Also, whatever elements may be latent in the unirrigated desert, it is well known that the waters, when brought in upon it, bring with them many new, rich elements of soil, obtained through their previous flow over other lands, many of them hundreds of miles distant.

So, teacher, is it with the question of moral culture, of spiritual growth. Men point to the vast wastes of humanity, not in cities only, but everywhere, and they declare that their lamentably sad condition requires the "accretion" of many spiritual elements. True. But may it not be truer that these so-called human wastes are, many at least, "fertile to excess" already, and only require the application of heaven's water of everlasting life to make the desert blossom as the rose?

So may the condition of the poorest be brightened into the sweet life of the rarest bloom.

Christ's ministry was to the poorest of the land. He went where others would not go. He did what others would not do. He said what others would not say. He *loved* what others would not love. He died for those for whom no man would dare to die—for you, for me.

And why? To bring human life forth from the ruin and waste of sin to the brightness of immortality!

How easy to apply the message of the rose

to children's hearts when you have rightly learned it yourself!

Go, teacher; labour on. God, through your fragrant, loving life, is speaking to the children whom you seek to save.

XXXVII

THE HOPE OF THE IMMORTELLE

OBJECT USED: Cudweeds or field-asters, dyed in bunches of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. Make a wooden frame of good size—say two and a half by three feet—upon one side of which stoutly nail a piece of strong canvas, stretching the canvas as tightly from side to side upon the frame as possible. Upon this canvas, and within the frame, arrange a thick bed or background of moss. Common wood-moss is very pretty. Then take the dyed asters (immortelles) in the order of the colours given, cutting the stems short enough to hold well in the background of moss, and arrange thereon a rainbow arch. It will be easier to place the red in the moss first, then the orange, and so on to the seventh. When finished, if care has been taken, you will have a handsome object with which to illustrate your address. The one we made was afterward photographed.

SCRIPTURAL BASIS: Gen. ix. 8–17.

FIRST tell the story of the flood. Then speak of the shape or form of the rainbow—a circle, only part of which, however, is seen at any one time from any one point. Hence, merely the arch is displayed in the object. As a circle the rainbow is the significant though seldom-used symbol of the eternal nature of God's promises to men.

The rainbow is therefore an emblem of undying hope—the hope of immortality.

Again, point out anew the familiar fact that the rainbow is ever on that side of the heavens which at the time of the bow's appearance is opposite to the sun. Thus God's truth (the sun), shining through our gloom (earth's storm-mists), displays God's promises in love and mercy (the bow).

Again, explain that the rainbow ascends in the heavens as the sun declines, and that it descends as the sun rises.

When the principles of truth appear to pass under gathering clouds of doubt, the sun of light to descend, then God's promises rise. When the promises seem to fail, God's love withdrawn, we have the ascending Sun of Righteousness arising with healing in His wings.

We are therefore never left a moment without the help of heaven's bright and comforting ministries. Such comfort shines in the humblest dewdrop, glorifying lowliest flowers and grasses; and then again is seen shimmering amid the highest clouds.

God's love is world-wide in its ministry. It does not forget to adorn—under the figure of

the rainbow that spans the roaring cataract of Niagara—even the turbulence, the rushing of mad human passion. How wild the waters! how peaceful the rainbow! how horrible the abyss! how spirit-like the bow as it dances over it!

Applying these points, focus the thought at God's mercy for sinful men, and leave the lesson there.

Another treatment, suggested briefly, might be this:

After utilising for an introduction whatever material has already been supplied, turn the thought upon the significance of each of the seven principal colours in the rainbow.

Thus, *red*: the colour of the ruby, signifying royalty; divine love; the Holy Spirit.

Orange: love and kingliness mingled.

Yellow: the rare purity and value of tried character.

Green: the colour of spring foliage; new life; freshness of youth.

Blue: the colour of the summer sky; heaven; constancy; fidelity; truth.

Indigo: a deep colour, signifying the depth of human need filled with the love of God.

Violet: God's love in the humblest life.

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"I will sing a new song unto Thee, O God: . . .
When our sons shall be as plants grown up in their youth;
And our daughters as corner-stones, hewn after the fashion of a palace. . . .
Happy is the people that is in such a case:
Yea, happy is the people whose God is the Lord."
(Ps. cxliv. 9, 12, 15, R.V.)

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